

WARREN
MAGAZINE



VAMPI
#29

NOV. 1973

ILLUSTRATED TALES TO BEWITCH & BEDEVIL YOU

VAMPIRELLA

75¢

168956
POC



IN THE DEPTHS
of LOCH EERIE
VAMPIRELLA
BATTLES THE
"UNDEAD
OF THE DEEP!"

Page 7

A history of VAMPIRES

LONG BEFORE **CHRISTOPHER LEE** PORTRAYED **DRACULA** ON THE SCREEN...

...BEFORE **BELA LUGOSI** BROUGHT **DRACULA** TO THE CINEMA FROM THE BROADWAY STAGE...

...LONG BEFORE **MAX SCHRECK** ENACTED THE PART IN THE 1922 CLASSIC **NOSFERATU**...

...EVEN BEFORE **BRAM STOKER'S** IMMORTAL 1897 NOVEL, **DRACULA**... THERE WERE **VAMPIRES!**

BUT **UNLIKE TODAY**...WHERE **VAMPIRES** ARE TRADITIONALLY PORTRAYED AS HANDSOME MALE ACTORS LIKE **LEE** AND **LUGOSI**, THERE ONCE WAS A TIME WHEN THE VAMPIRE WAS THOUGHT OF AS A FAR MORE **FEARSOME** CREATURE OF THE NIGHT!

WHILE NOT A **VAMPIRE** IN THE STRICTEST SENSE OF THE TERM, THE FLORENTINE **BLOOD BEAST** REMAINS A **MYSTERY** TO THIS DAY, AND HAS GONE DOWN IN THE PAGES OF HISTORY AS ONE OF THE FEW **TRUE**, DOCUMENTED CASES OF BLOOD-LUSTING **VAMPIRISM!**



RECORDS STILL EXIST TELLING OF THE MAMMOTH FANGED BEAST THAT DRAINED THE **BLOOD** OF WOMEN IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY **FLORENCE!**

BUT EVEN BEFORE THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, THE **EGYPTIANS** HAD THEIR OWN VERSION OF THE **UNDEAD**...



IT WAS COMMONLY BELIEVED THAT THE **ROTTING CORPSE** OF A LEPROUS **SLAVE** WHO DIED IN BONDAGE, WOULD RETURN FROM THE **GRAVE TO FEED** ON THE BLOOD OF EGYPTIAN ROYALTY!

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY **SPANIARDS** HAD THEIR OWN **UNIQUE** VAMPIRE...
...THE CHILD-SIZED, MULTI-FANGED **SLUG**... THAT MIRACULOUSLY TURNED INTO A HANDSOME SUN-BRONZED **NOBLEMAN** WITH THE MORNING LIGHT!



THE **DUTCH** TELL OF THEIR 'DRACULA' TWO HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE **BRAM STOKER** CAME UP WITH HIS! THEY CALLED HIM **VOLMAR!**



HE WAS AN **UGLY** BEAKED-FANGED MAN-THING... PREYING **EXCLUSIVELY** ON THE AGED...!

STORY AND ART BY BILL DuBAY

CONTINUED ON INSIDE BACK COVER...



OUR COVER

Deep in the haunted waters of Loch Eerie, VAMPIRELLA is confronted by an ages-old monstrosity that feeds only on human flesh! It is "The Undead of the Deep!" Page 7.

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VAMPIRELLA

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ISSUE NO. 29
NOVEMBER 1973

VAMPI'S SCARLET LETTERS

"You claim to be escape literature," cries reader Sue Foliart, "yet you fill your pages with hatred!" More jabs from other readers.

VAMPI'S VAULT Profiling cover artist great *Sanjulian*, plus Fanzine Reviews, and for those of you who clamored for it, a preview of *three new Warren series*.

THE UNDEAD OF THE DEEP

Alistair MacDaemon is *dead*, yet now his corpse is *stolen away* to a watery grave. VAMPIRELLA alone has the power to bring it back.

THE EVIL EYE She was *beautiful!* Lively, *seductive!* And the ugly townswomen *hated* her. *Feared* her. But they were *bigots!* They labeled her a *witch*, and set out to *destroy* her!

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN It was *dark!* *Cold!* He couldn't recall *who* he was. *Where* he was. But he recalled the *accident*, the *crash!* And he recalled that he was *DEAD!*

LAST LUNCH FOR RATS First his pet *rats* were *killed!* Then Harold himself was *drowned*. That was *twenty years* ago. Now, Harold's back...a rotting, *avenging corpse*.

THE VAMPIRES ARE COMING

Bloody battlefields never affected the brave, *unshakeable* drummer boy. Now he screams at night, afraid of the man he saw drink *blood*.

VAMPI AT THE COMIC-CON

Blood drips from the *hotel walls*, and the *vampires* are on stage! Don't worry! It's just the 1973 Annual Comic Art Costume Parade.



What about that Vampi look-alike contest?

Watch out, I'm contagious! I just spread Vampi-fever among 250 people or so! **How?** My VAMPIRELLA T-shirt just arrived and I wore it to work! (My job is in the shipping department of a leading bra-and-girdle company, and in the summer the heat becomes unbearable. T-shirts are the only thing to wear!)

Anyhow, hundreds of people who work there who've never read anything other than say, FIELD AND STREAM and PHOTOPLAY, saw VAMPI for the first time. What happened was most interesting: People stopped me in the halls to get a good look at our girl from Drakulon, and several of the bosses ran imaginary errands just to get a good look at the shirt! And guess what! Most people were able to pronounce your name correctly.

But the **biggest** joke happened several days after I wore the shirt. At break time I noticed one of the girls I worked with was having a cherry soda. I said, "Drinking blood?" And she said, "Yes, I'm VAMPIRELLA!" Needless to say it broke everyone up for some time.

Also, you're right! The VAMPIRELLA T-shirt doesn't fade when washed!

RON SAPP
Dover, Delaware

Hi, beautiful! I'm just writing to tell you that I think VAMPIRELLA #25 was one of your best issues yet! I especially enjoyed "What Price Love." But VAMPIRELLA a murderess at the end? I sure hope not!

Hey! What about that VAMPIRELLA look-alike contest? When are you going to have it? It seems like I've been waiting forever. And please put a picture of the winner in your magazine.

I think VAMPI is the most beautiful person or thing anywhere. And I was wondering if you could hitch me up with someone my age that looks like you! I'm 14 years old.



CHRIS McCART
Port Charlotte, Florida

Attention all my 14-year-old look-alikes! You are ordered to report to the front door of Chris McCart's house in Port Charlotte immediately. He'll be expecting you.

The artwork in "Welcome to the Witches' Coven" in VAMPIRELLA #27 was wonderfully chilling and sinister. To me, the use of shades of black and white make stories of the sinister and weird much more effective than color. My compliments to Luis Garcia.

Ignore The Gremlin's complaints; we read VAMPIRELLA to leave the common, plain, often ugly world behind.

RUSSELL L. POTTER
Washington, D.C.

Just a few lines to let you know that Jeff Kilian isn't the only person in Wichita who reads your magazine! The name, for your records, is **Steven John**.

Onto comments, I believe **Enrich** is the best cover artist that VAMPIRELLA has had in a long time, but why "Nimrod" on the cover? For that matter, why "Nimrod"? Haven't we been inundated enough with the sword and sorcery type of heroes? Please leave the horror mags to what they were made for: **Illustrated horror**.

STEVEN JOHN
Wichita, Kansas

I want you to know issue #26 of VAMPIRELLA was great. You are really showing improvement! (Ha! Ha! Just kidding! You've always been great!)

Your first story, "Demons in the Fog," was outstanding. It was a little sad, though. You really shouldn't downgrade poor Pendragon that way. "Moonspawn" was also great. **Esteban Maroto** sure knows his stuff!

"Fringe Benefits" topped them all though. **Jose Bea** is a fine realistic artist. And his work in color is superb.

CAROLE MORRISON
Norfolk, Virginia

The cover to VAMPI #26 was a good idea, but kindly stick to one by a single artist after this. "Death and Dr. Morbius" was a good filler, due to excellent **Auraleon** art. Please keep these two-page stories a regular feature.

VAMPIRELLA, though! Your story was poorly done. Your saga has been going downhill since **T. Casey Brennan** and **Steve Englehart** left. The art was not to my tastes, and **Escalano** did little to help the small impact of the story.

"Moonspawn" was excellent. The story was a fine job by **Douglas Moench**, and the art, the issue's best, was **Esteban Maroto's** standard!

"Fringe Benefits" was good all around, the color helping tremendously. However, I do think the color could be a little less vibrant.

Your last couple of stories were both excellent. "Demon Child" was one of the finest efforts I've ever seen, with above average art by **Ramon Torrents**. And "Blood Brothers" had fascinating art by **Munes**. It seemed like a combination of **Jose Bea** and **Luis Garcia**. Let's have more **Munes**.

A great issue throughout.

JIM BIEDLER
Leesport, Pennsylvania

Boy, did you guys (and gals) at **Warren** mess up VAMPIRELLA #26! On the contents page you said "Demons in the Fog" was on page 6 when it was on page 7. The contents said "Moonspawn" was on page 7 (what? VAMPI'S story only 1 page long?), yet I found it on page 19. "Fringe Benefits" was on 31, not 19; "Demon Child" was on 39, not 31; "Blood Brothers" was on 48 instead of 39; and "Vampi's Vault" was way over on page 48 instead of page 6.

And lastly, **Paul Neary** didn't even have a Frankenstein story in **EERIE** #48!



ERIC SCHULZ
Racine, Wisconsin

Whew! Looks like little **Igor**, our resident production man, blew it, **Eric**. And here we thought an experienced headstone cutter could do better than that. You're on the list, **Igor**, of people I look up when I run out of blood substitute!

Bill DuBay's cover on VAMPIRELLA #26 was superb. "Death and Dr. Morbius" started out good, but those last two panels ruined it. **Len Wein's** VAMPI saga this round just wasn't up to par. I'm afraid, although I did like the splash page. **James Crawford's** and **Ramon Torrents'** "Demon Child" was by far the best story of the issue, bar none. Please keep **Torrents**, he's your best artist other than **Reed Crandall**. The wolf pictured on page 22 was realistic enough to jump out of the page!

MIKE KAROL
Taunton, Massachusetts

You guys are terrific! I just fell in love with your inside cover illustration of **vampires**! Your ad for the **DRACULA** mag. Only thing that would have made it more impressive is a color photo of none other than the great **Christopher Lee**... fanged, caped, and all. I've seen all those other mags, also entitled "DRACULA," but they can't fool me. I know the fantastic **Warren** work anywhere!

The color section of VAMPIRELLA is also great. I thought you would raise your price, but you didn't! **FAN-tastic!** As far as **The Gremlin** goes, I'm sure she wrote the wrong publishers.



TINA CLOVE
Chicago, Illinois

Future issues will contain that same color you enjoy, **Tina**. And how did you like **Enrich's** version of **Count Lee** on the cover of **EERIE** #50?



Readers felt **Doug Moench** and **Jose Bea** had a firm grasp of master storytelling when they spun "Fringe Benefits," the color story from Vampi #26. Or was it a deathgrip?

You're really on your way!

This is my first commentary on **VAMPIRELLA** magazine, and it won't be my last. All of my commentaries will deal with one issue in particular. This first one concerns **VAMPIRELLA** #25.

"What Price Love," the **VAMPIRELLA** story by **Bill DuBay** and **Jose Gonzalez**, is one of your best. Patrick's death was saddening, and it was handled splendidly. But I find one fault: On page 10, it is stated that this is the first time **VAMPIRELLA** has ever killed. By that I assume you mean humans. I may be mistaken, but I seem to remember another man she killed, back in **VAMPIRELLA** #12.

"The Haunted Child." I am surprised you included a story of such low calibre in your magazine. How did Bill know the little girl was Crystal? Why did Dr. Chalk put Bill in a strait-jacket? He could be sued! And on page 27, how did Bill, who is of course blind, see the blood on Crystal's knife? There was one bright spot though—the ending.

"Nimrod." Keep up the good work! Your color section is a wonder! Nimrod's respect for life is a beautiful thing to behold.

"Cold Calculations" was OK, as stories go. The ending was superb, but the rest was only so-so.

Which brings me to your last tidbit, "The Dead Howl at Midnight." I will admit it was better than "The Haunted Child," but that's as far as I'll go.

You'll be hearing from me as soon as #26 comes out!

THE JACKAL
Wauchula, Florida

How do you say "stinks" in Drakulonese? I want to make sure you understand every comment I make on **VAMPIRELLA** #26.

Not seeing "Vampi's Flames" doesn't bother me that much, but **Escolano's** stuff this time did. The figures were too stiff and you could clearly tell the difference between his work and **Jose Gonzalez's**, my favorite of the two. In plain English, **Gonzalez** was better off alone.

Now let me comment on your other stories. "Moonspawn" had good art but the writing wasn't done as well. "Fringe Benefits" was surprisingly excellent, and "Demon Child" was bad from beginning to end. And I didn't bother to read "Blood Brothers." I was scared it might be like the others!

PATRICIA ABBINANTI
Jackson Heights, Florida 11370

You have followed the crowd by making your main characters, especially the women, conform to the present-day American standards of beauty. This gets very tiresome. **Sam Milligan** excused this by saying that "beauty" is far more inspiring than "plainness," and that human-beings are beautiful. But what he really seems to be saying is that **PLAYBOY**-type figures are more inspiring than fat, thin, or unusual ones. That these human-beings who have **PLAYBOY** bunny (or **Charles Atlas**) figures are beautiful and forget the others.

You claim to be escape literature. Yet your pages are full of violence, terror, hate, sorrow and strife...not to mention the stereotypes I spoke of before. Ever stop to think that those are the sort of things we're trying to escape from??

Any old crime or mystery magazine can crank out tales of violence and cruelty. Artists like **Ramon Torrents** should use their talents and imagination in depicting the wonder and strangeness and mystery of the **natural** and **super-natural** world.

You guys can do very fine work; don't waste all that beauty on ugliness!

SUE FOLIART
Dillingham, Arkansas

First of all, I think your own story, "Demons in the Fog," was top-flight, as it always is.

Second of all, I thought "Moonspawn" had the worst beginning to a werewolf yarn than any I've ever seen. It occurs to me that if that much radiation was ever released on anything it would kill it almost certainly.

"Fringe Benefits" and "The Demon Child" were both drawn well (especially the **Doug Moench/Jose Bea** color collaboration), and both were excellently written.

"Blood Brothers" was basically a good story with very good artwork by **Munes**, even though it was never clearly stated who they were planning to uprise against, or when the story was taking place.

All in all a very good **VAMPIRELLA** this time. Keep up the far-out color work.

JOHN BRUNO
Trumbull, Connecticut

Sorry, John! No color this time! We wanted to see what reader reaction would be without it for an issue. But we've got a color story next issue that'll make a rainbow look pale by comparison.



Many readers noted the difference between **Gonzalez** (left) and **Escolano's** (right) art. Many dug "Demons in the Fog" in **Vampi** #26. Still others are true only unto **Gonzalez**.

Hail the team of **Bill DuBay** and **Jose Gonzalez**! May they live and work together on the **VAMPIRELLA** sagas forever!

DuBay's script for "What Price Love" (**VAMPI** #25) is the greatest! I've never read anything as great as that in a horror mag. And I've read quite a few.

And **Gonzalez**, your artwork for that story is superb! **VAMPI'S** facial expressions were filled with such human emotion that I couldn't help but to feel sorry for her, even though I'm certain she will overcome her lust in the end.

Combined, the efforts of **DuBay** and **Gonzalez** wrenched rare emotion from me, and I know a lot of others feel the same way.

JOHN WHITE
Oklahoma City, Okla.

I've just read **VAMPIRELLA** #26 and as a whole it was pretty good. The **VAMPIRELLA** strip never fails to be interesting in both art and story and this issue's "Demons in the Fog" was no exception. **Len Wein** and **Jose Gonzalez** do such a great job in getting a story across.

RICHARD MAYHEW
Cumberland, Maryland

I think your magazine is the greatest. I plan on buying a **VAMPIRELLA** poster as soon as I can.

When are you going to put out **VAMPIRELLA** rings?



RICHARD L. SMITH
Alexander, Arkansas

Vampirella rings? Don't you mean wings, Richard?

VAMPI'S SICK!

Seems not enough of you are writing her and she's been in the dumps all week. Help an ailing vampiress today—WRITE!

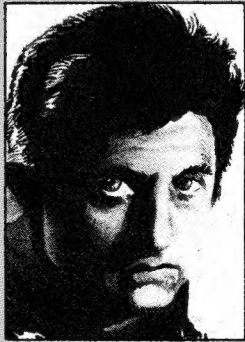


VAMPIRE'S VAULT

FIRST TESTAMENT OF A MASTER ARTIST:

SANJULIAN

A WILL WITH A FAR BETTER WAY!



In 1961, he left his job with Fox and entered the Superior School of Art in San Jorge, Spain. There he learned the importance of color, natural design, and most important, anatomy, his favorite subject. Anywhere in Spain you'll find works represented at one of the many collector's exhibits.

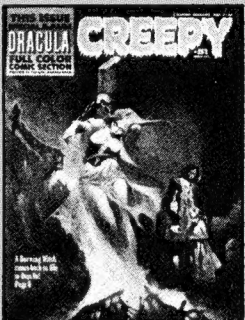
He continues studying his craft in earnest, and is continually improving his awesome style.

Sanjulian has the distinction of pulling off what every other artist strives for... but few achieve: He has mastered his craft! Inside-out, upside-down, horizontally and vertically, it cannot be denied that Sanjulian is the all-time greatest Warren cover artist!

Born thirty-two years ago in Barcelona, Spain, Sanjulian put his talents to use early. He was 16 when he began working in his spare time at the publicity offices of 20th Century Fox, painting billboards for movies, writing and editing film promotions for newspapers, and designing press-books. It was here, says Sanjulian, that he discovered his real love. He had to become a master-painter.

Today, Sanjulian paints paperback book covers for Dell, Avon, Signet, and many others on a continual basis. His first work for the Warren magazines graced the cover of VAMPIRELLA #12. He's done almost twenty-five covers for CREEPY, EERIE and VAMPIRELLA since that time, becoming the first and foremost Warren cover artist today!

A former Merchant Marine, holding a bachelor's degree in art, Sanjulian's favorite pastime is movies, but he also collects anything on art. His favorite artist is Hal Foster, legendary creator of the Prince Valiant Sunday comic strip.



Twin examples of Sanjulian's master touch.

PREVIEW: 3 NEW WARREN SERIES

All right, you win! Ever since we started our new rotating series, we've been swamped with requests/demands to see a preview of some of our upcoming features. So here you are, three of them, coming soon in the pages of EERIE and VAMPIRELLA. Watch for them!

CHILD

His father created him from bits and pieces of animal skin, vowing to the heavens that he would have a son. And one stormy night it happened. The child-thing arose and took life! Writer Greg Potter pulls off a fantastic new twist on the Dr. Frankenstein scheme, with art by Jim Stenstrom. (Wha?? Thought he was a writer?)

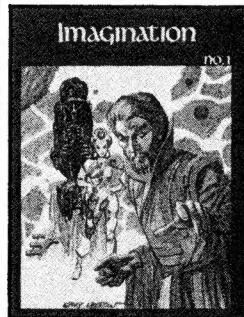
PANTHA

She's black, she's beautiful, she's deadly. She's like nothing else you've ever seen. Stalking the streets of New York during the turn of the century, the panther-woman must kill nightly, or die by the curse that created her. Script by old-pro Steve Skeates, aided by the eeriest artist around, Auraleon.

FREAKS

Just before the depression these people lived, a group of freaks desperately searching for survival. Maligned by society, hunted by humanity, the Freaks have stopped running. Now, they attack! Bill DuBay returns to the drawing board after an all too long absence... with scripting by Warren super-star, Doug Moench.

FANZINE REVIEWS



IMAGINATION
138-06 78 Road
Flushing, NY 11367
\$1.50



FRIGHT & FANTASY
315 Rushton Rd.
Toronto, 10, Ontario
60¢



WONDERWORLD
P.O. Box 16168
Long Beach, CA 90806
75¢

Imagination is true to its title in many respects. The magazine sports a front color cover by Warren alumnus Gray Morrow, plus interiors by Jeff Jones and Neal Adams. The formula is basically potpourri, consisting of highly entertaining odds and ends (such as an unpublished daily strip by Neal Adams) and a fine 3-page piece on wizardry by Mike Kaluta. Berni Wrightson fans will have a ball with his "Conjure Woman" contribution, about a witch with the right ingredients. Imagination it's full of, and all in all its visions are admirable. Imagination is a one-shot venture, likely to be selling fast, so if you have the coin, get on to this one.

Film buffs are very strange people. They enjoy doing very strange things. Like publishing film-zines. The quality of this gender of amateur publication is varied, as are all amateur projects. Fright & Fantasy, happily, is more than just a half-hearted effort. The book is filled with pictures and illustrations throughout its 36 pages, and the articles are both written and researched with an obvious love for film art. The lengthy article on the Hammer Dracula and Frankenstein series is in no small way entertaining, with authoritative analysis and breakdowns. F&F is not without its blatant flaws, but for 60¢, live a little!

There are three or four magazines of this sort, dealing with indepth articles on the creators and the products of the graphic story field. Wonderworld, formerly Graphic Story World, is in front of the lot. Going beyond the usual specialized articles which cater to bespangled super-heroes and sadistic barbarians, Wonderworld reaches into the lives and creations of the new innovators as well as keeping tabs on the old guard. All aspects of the graphic story field are here at your ready fingertips: issue #9 containing a biographical sketch of artist-writer-innovator, Richard Corben just for starters. Urgently recommended. You won't find better.

A GREAT **WIND** RUFFLES THE SURFACE OF THE LOCH, BUILDING INTO A CRESCENDO OF **SOUND AND FURY!**

IT IS AS IF THE OLD NORSE GODS OF **ULTIMA THULE** ARE LAUGHING IN **VALHALLA**...LAUGHING AT THE FRUSTRATION OF MERE MEN, WHO SOUGHT TO ENTOMB THE WILD SPIRIT OF THE SIXTEENTH AND LAST LAIRD OF MACDAEMON...
ALASTAIR MACDAEMON, THE MACDAEMON WHO **DIED** AT THE HANDS OF A TWO-HUNDRED YEAR-OLD **MONSTROSITY!**

VAMPIRELLA

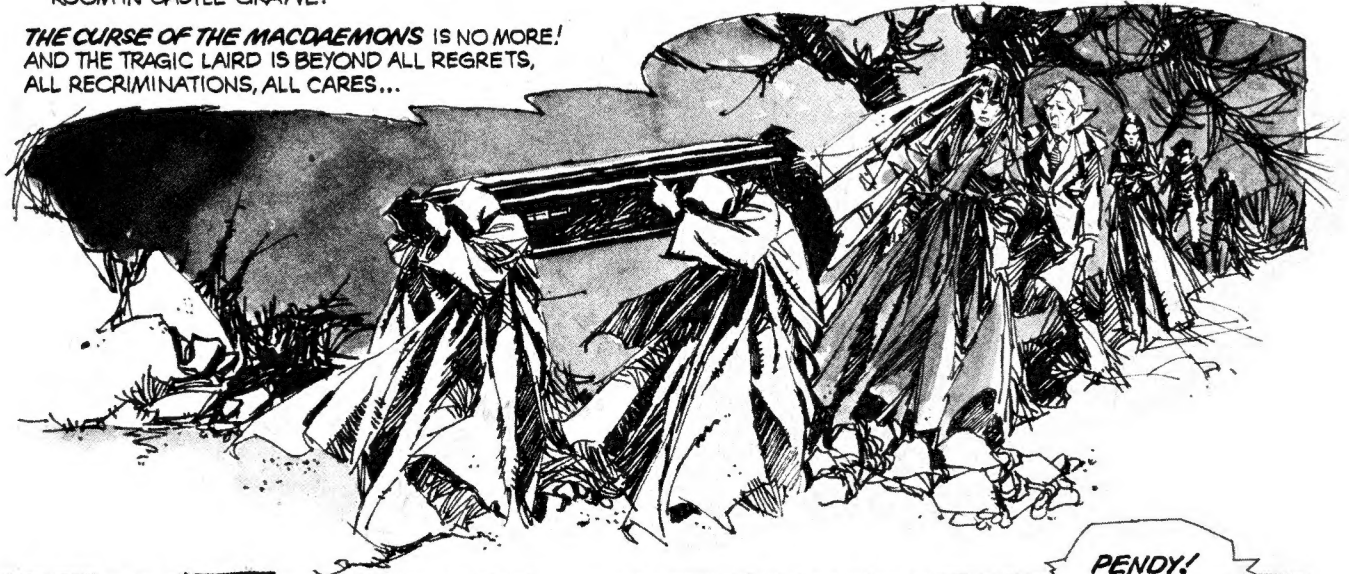
AND THE UNDEAD OF THE DEEP!



THE **LAST** LAIRD OF MACDAEMONS IS TO BE LAID TO REST, AND A THOUSAND YEARS OF TRADITION HAS BEEN **SNUFFED-OUT** LIKE A CANDLE FLAME...THAT MUCH IS WHAT THE WORLD KNOWS.

WHAT THE WORLD DOES **NOT** KNOW IS THAT A **HEADLESS** CORPSE LIES WITHIN THE RICHLY- FURNISHED COFFIN...THE HEAD WRENCHED OFF AND PARTLY **DEVoured** BY THE **SHE-MONSTER** THAT ONCE INHABITED THE SECRET, LOCKED ROOM IN CASTLE GRAYVE.

THE CURSE OF THE MACDAEMONS IS NO MORE!
AND THE TRAGIC LAIRD IS BEYOND ALL REGRETS,
ALL RECRIMINATIONS, ALL CARES...



PENDRAGON SHIVERS, GLANCES SIDELONG AT HIS BEAUTIFUL COMPANION, AND TAKES A LONG PULL AT HIS HIP-FLASK.

IT'S ALL VERY WELL FOR THE RAVISHING AND IMPERTURBABLE VAMPI, BUT A MERE MORTAL SUCH AS I NEEDS **SPIRITUAL** REFRESHMENT AT THESE TIMES!



AND THEN...

PENDY!
LOOK!

GUUUUUHHH...



THEY'RE GOING RIGHT IN! I CAN'T STAND IT!...IT'S NOT RESPECTFUL TO THE DEAD!
IT'S UNNATURAL!!



THE CHILL WATERS OF LOCH EERIE CLOSE ABOVE THE HEADS OF THE PALLBEARERS! BUT THEY JUST KEEP ON WALKING!



AND AS THE CASKET BEARERS **SUBMERGE**,
THE **PHANTOM WIND** DIES AS QUICKLY AS IT CAME...

WHAT...WHAT
HAPPENED,
VAMPIRE?

I SENSE THE
PRESENCE OF
RECENTLY-DEPARTED
EVIL...

...THE SAME
ELEMENTAL,
LIFE-LOATHING,
COSMICALLY-
VILE EVIL THAT
I SENSED WHEN
WE FIRST CAME
HERE!

THEY SLEEP, THAT NIGHT, IN THE INN BY THE LOCH SHORE.

MAY THE **SPIRIT** O'BONNIE
SCOTLAND GRANT THIS OLD
WRECK A QUIET REST FREE
FROM GHOSTIES AND
GHOULIES AN' THINGS THAT
GO **BUMP** IN THE
NIGHT!

WHAT HAPPENED TO
POOR ALASTAIR'S
CORPSE?... **WHAT?**

VAMPIRELLA SLEEPS SOUNDLY.
TO HER, IN THE DARK HOURS,
COME **SPECTRES**...

...**SPECTRES** FROM **A THOUSAND**
YEARS OF CLAN MACDAEMON!
FIFTEEN HEREDITARY LAIRDS AND
THEIR LADIES. A TEEMING MASS OF
MACDAEMON SWORD-BEARERS,
CLANSMEN, SHEEP-STEALERS, BORDER-
REIVERS, CUT-THROATS, A THOUSAND
YEARS OF SCOTLAND'S RACKETTY,
RAMSHACKLE, **BLOODY** HISTORY!

VAMPIRELLA SNAPS AWAKE...

DESCEND INTO THE
LOCH AND FETCH BACK POOR
ALASTAIR'S BODY, SO THAT IT
CAN REST IN PEACE AMONG THE
CORPSES OF HIS ANCESTORS!
YES! THAT'S THE **LEAST**
I CAN DO FOR HIM...

IT DIDN'T LAST
LONG...THE THING THAT
WAS BETWEEN... BUT WE
MADE SWEET MUSIC
TOGETHER WHILE IT
WAS THERE!

GIVE US THE BODY OF THE
LAIRD ALASTAIR... BRING
HIM BACK... LET HIM LIE
IN CONSECRATED
GROUND!

PENDRAGON FLIPS WHEN SHE GIVES HIM THE NEWS NEXT MORNING.

GO DOWN INTO THE LOCH AND BRING BACK THAT GUY'S BODY. ♪ VAMPI, MY ANGEL, ARE YOU *NUTS*? YOU DON'T HAVE *FISH* AMONG YOUR ANCESTRY, I TAKE IT?

NO, PENDY. BUT WE OF *DRAKULON* CAN EXIST UNDERWATER, GIVEN CERTAIN CONDITIONS...

VAMPIRELLA IS NOT MERELY A BEAUTIFUL BODY AND A CLEAR INTELLECT. SHE COMES FROM THE *VAMPIRE* WORLD OF *DRAKULON* AND CAN ONLY LIVE AS A NORMAL WOMAN BY DRINKING *BLOOD SUBSTITUTE* SERUM EVERY TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

TO US, WATER IS A *NEUTRAL* ELEMENT. IN IT, WE CAN LIVE AND THRIVE AT SOME COST TO OUR *METABOLISM*. I'LL NEED TO TAKE MY PLASMA EVERY *SIX* HOURS! IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO *DISTURB* MY METABOLISM, IT COULD MEAN SERIOUS TROUBLE, BUT I REALLY WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT...

... *NOT* DOWN THERE!

GOOD-BYE, PENDY DEAR. KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED FOR ME!

GUH! COME BACK SOON, VAMPI, MY ANGEL. I SHALL DIE EVERY HOUR THAT YOU'RE AWAY.

THE GORGEOUS VAMPIRESS POSES FOR A BREATHLESS INSTANT...AND THEN DIVES INTO LOCH EERIE.

DOWN...DOWN...DOWN SHE GOES...

THE DEPTHS OF THE GREAT SEA-LOCH HAVE **NEVER** BEEN PLUMBED BY THE DEVICES OF **MAN**. ANCIENT **WRECKS** LITTER ITS BED... FORGOTTEN **CRYPTS** OF LOST SEAMEN'S SOULS...

AS VAMPIRELLA DRAWS CLOSE, SHE SEES THAT **FIGURES** STALK THE WEED-TANGLED DECKS! **LIVING** FIGURES WITH **DEAD**, LACK-LUSTRE EYES.

STRANGE SOUNDS OF **REVELRY** REACH HER EARS. AND SHE **TURNS**...

IT CAN'T BE... BUT IT IS... **MUSIC!**

WHERE THE LOCH JOINS WITH THE GREAT OCEAN, LIES A ONCE-PROUD **LINER** WHOSE TRAGIC END MADE WORLD NEWS AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. NOW, LIGHTS BLAZE FROM HER THOUSAND PORTHOLES, AND THE MUSIC OF **RAGTIME** ISSUES FROM THE VAST HOLE IN HER HULL!

AND **LIVING BEINGS DANCE** TO THAT MUSIC!

THE LIGHTS OF THE CRYSTAL CHANDELIERS SPARKLE FROM A MILLION SEQUINS. THE VAST BALLROOM ECHOES AND RE-ECHOES TO THE BEAT OF THE BAND. EVERYONE IS DANCING. IT IS RAGTIME... BUT DETACHED... UNEARTHLY... UTTERLY JOYLESS.



SHE SEES ALASTAIR MACDAEMON, STILL WEARING THE HIGHLAND DRESS IN WHICH HE HAD BEEN LAID TO REST IN HIS COFFIN.



THE LAST LAIRD OF THE MACDAEMONS IS A **WHOLE MAN** AGAIN, WITH A HEAD ON HIS SHOULDERS. ONLY THE **EYES** ARE DEAD. THE STARING, UNSEEING EYES.



THESE PEOPLE... ALASTAIR AND THE REST... THEY'RE ALL **UNDEAD!** BOUND TO A SEMBLANCE OF LIFE BY SOME ALIEN FORCE!

BUT WHO... **WHO...** OR **WHAT...** IS CARRYING ON THIS HIDEOUS **JEST** WITH THESE POOR WRETCHES?



THE ANSWER COMES ACROSS THE CROWDED BALL-ROOM... AS THE GIRL FROM DRAKULON SEES A FAMILIAR HEART-STOPPING FIGURE.

IT IS AS IF A MILLION YEARS OF EMPTINESS FALL FROM THE MIND AND SPIRIT OF VAMPIRELLA. STARS SHIFT THEIR COURSES. MOONS WITHER AND DIE. AND, DOWN THROUGH AN IMMEASURABLE ETERNITY, A SMALL BIRD SINGS A LOVE SONG.



TRISTAN!

THEIR LIPS MEET IN A KISS OF *PURE PASSION*... AND THE *UNDEAD DANCERS* CIRCLE THEM, UNSEEING AND UNCARING.



VAMPIRELLA...
MY OWN
BELOVED.!

THEY HAD PARTED, WITH UNSPEAKABLE MISUNDERSTANDING, ON THE SURFACE OF *DRAKULON*, THE DYING PLANET OF *BLOOD*. THEY HAD BEEN LOVERS...TILL FRAILTY OF SPIRIT HAD TORN THEM APART.

I DREAMED... I
HOPED... NOT A DAY
HAS PAST BUT I
WHISPERED YOUR
NAME.



THE THINGS
I SAID... THE
TERRIBLE VOWS
I MADE... WILL
YOU *EVER*
FORGIVE ME, MY
VAMPIRELLA?

STRANGELY, THE MUSIC CHANGES. THE THROBBING VIOLINS PICK UP THE MELODY OF A *HAUNTING WALTZ* IN A MINOR KEY.

SHALL WE
DANCE?

DIVINE!



OUT OF THE GREAT GAPING HOLE IN THE HULL OF THE LINER, AND INTO THE UNCHARTED BED OF THE WIDE OCEAN...



WANDERING, HAND-IN-HAND, THROUGH THE WONDERLAND OF THE SUBMARINE FORESTS...



LOST, IN AN ETERNITY OF IDYLIC LOVE...



YOU'RE GOOD FOR ME, KNOW THAT?

MMMMM...

YOU'VE KNOCKED MY **METABOLISM** OUT OF WHACK, DARLING. I SHOULD BE TAKING MY PLASMA EVERY SIX HOURS. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT?... I DON'T FEEL THE NEED.



WHO NEEDS BLOOD SUBSTITUTE?

RIGHT! WHO **NEEDS** THE STUFF?



I **NEED** YOUR TOUCH...

TRISTAN, DON'T TEASE...

PLEASE...



E-E-E-EA-A-A-A-A-A-A-HH!!

BEFORE HER VERY EYES, THE BELOVED FACE



HIDEOUSLY...



CHANGES...



INSANELY!!!



THE WHOLE FORM OF THE CREATURE THAT
VAMPIRELLA HAD ACCEPTED AS HER LOST
LOVER TAKES ON A NEW SHAPE...



EEEEHHH!

IT CHANGES



NO!!!
NO-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O!!!

FINALLY, THE GLUTINOUS **MASS** OF STINKING **EVIL** HARDENS INTO THE NIGHTMARE SHAPE OF **THE MONSTER OF THE LOCH!**

IT IS NOW THAT VAMPIRELLA KNOWS THE TRUTH OF IT. SHE, WHO HAS DESTROYED THE MONSTER'S GHASTLY OFFSPRING, IS NOW HERSELF ABOUT TO BE DESTROYED. THE **TERROR** OF LOCH EERIE HAS POWERS BEYOND IMAGINING. IT IS, PERHAPS, A LESSER **DEMON** OF THE MAD, BANISHED GOD **CHAOS**, DRAWING ITS POWER FROM THAT BOUNDLESS **SOURCE**.

BY SEEKING OUT AND FINDING HER ONE WEAKNESS AND CHANGING INTO THE IMAGE OF HER LOST LOVER, **IT HAS LURED HER INTO DESTROYING HER LIFE-GIVING SERUM!**

VAMPIRELLA RUNS! THOUGH SHE KNOWS THAT, FOR HER, THERE CAN BE **NO ESCAPE!**



HER SENSES REEL, SUSPENDED FOR AN ECSTATIC WHILE BY THE DELIRIUM OF **PURE PASSION**, HER **METABOLISM** IS NOW **DOOMING** HER!



I CAN NEVER REACH THE SURFACE! I'M DYING!... I SHALL DIE DOWN HERE!

THAT'S ITS **REVENGE!** WHEN LIFE HAS LEFT ME, IT WILL MAKE ME ONE OF THE **UNDEAD!**



THE MAD MUSIC OF **RAGTIME** DINGS IN HER EARS. SHE SEES THE **UNDEAD** SHUFFLING IN THEIR ETERNAL, JOYLESS DANCE.

I SHALL BECOME ONE OF THEM... LIKE POOR ALASTAIR... ALIVE YET NOT ALIVE... PERHAPS WITH THE CAPACITY, STILL, FOR SUFFERING ... A PLAYTHING OF EVIL!



W-WHAT'S THIS?



DEAD OR UNDEAD, ALASTAIR'S VEINS RUN WITH RICH, RED BLOOD! I SMELL IT!

NOW BEGINS THE BLOOD-FEAST OF A LIFETIME!



I FEEL THE BLOOD-LUST RISING IN ME! AND I SEE MY WAY TO FREEDOM!



ALASTAIR MACDAEMON IS FIRST... HIS BODY SWIFTLY DRAINED, THE UNDEAD BECOMES...



...DEAD, ONCE AGAIN!



THE SEEMINGLY-INSATIABLE **BAT** GORGES ITSELF UPON THE DANCERS OF THE DEEP... ONE BY ONE...



AND, WHEN IT IS ALL OVER...



...A GREAT **CALM** FALLS UPON THE BALLROOM OF THE SUNKEN **LEVIATHAN**.

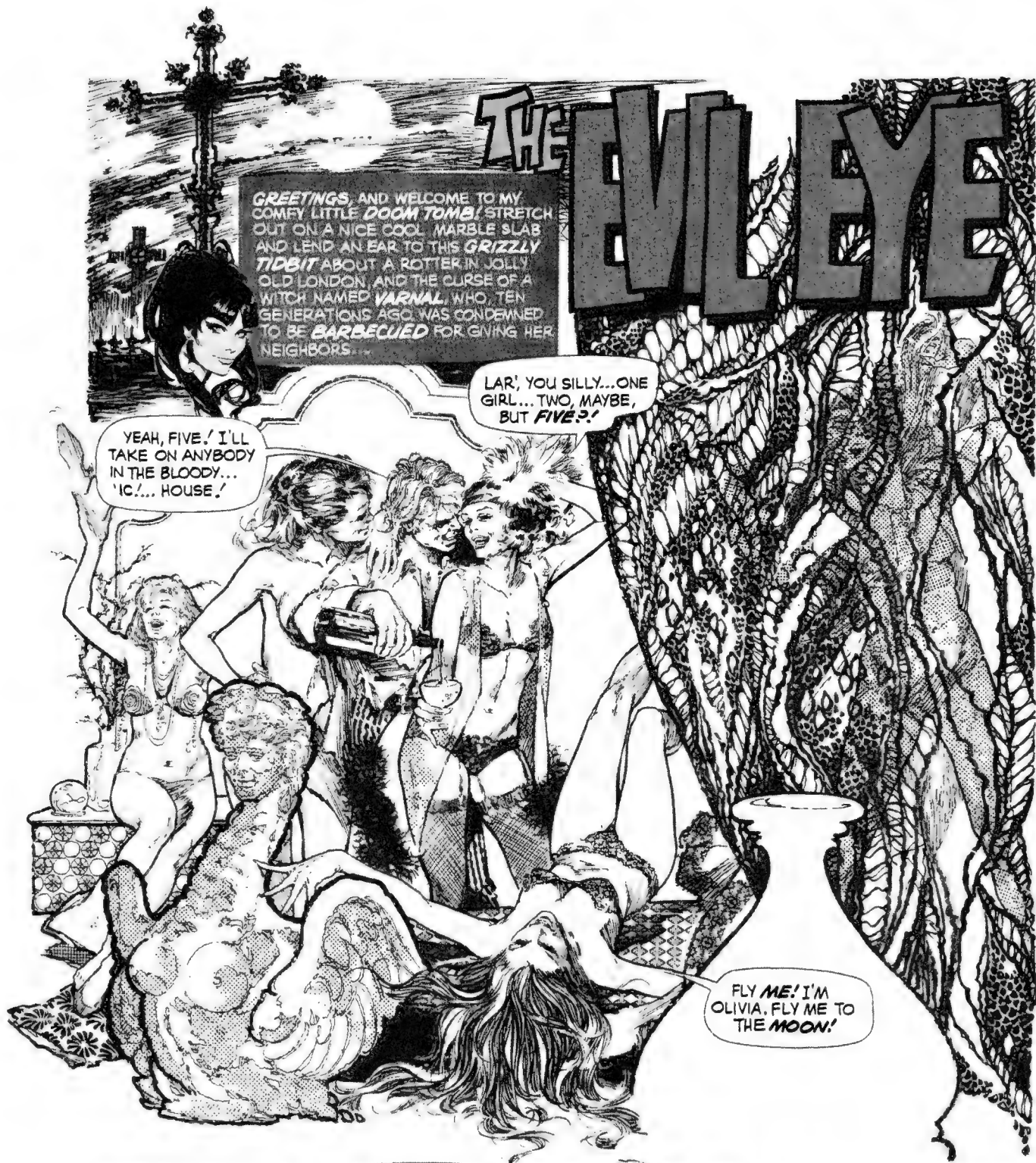


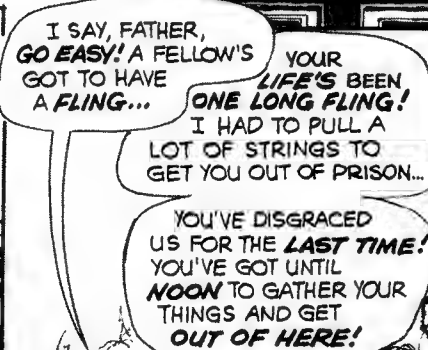
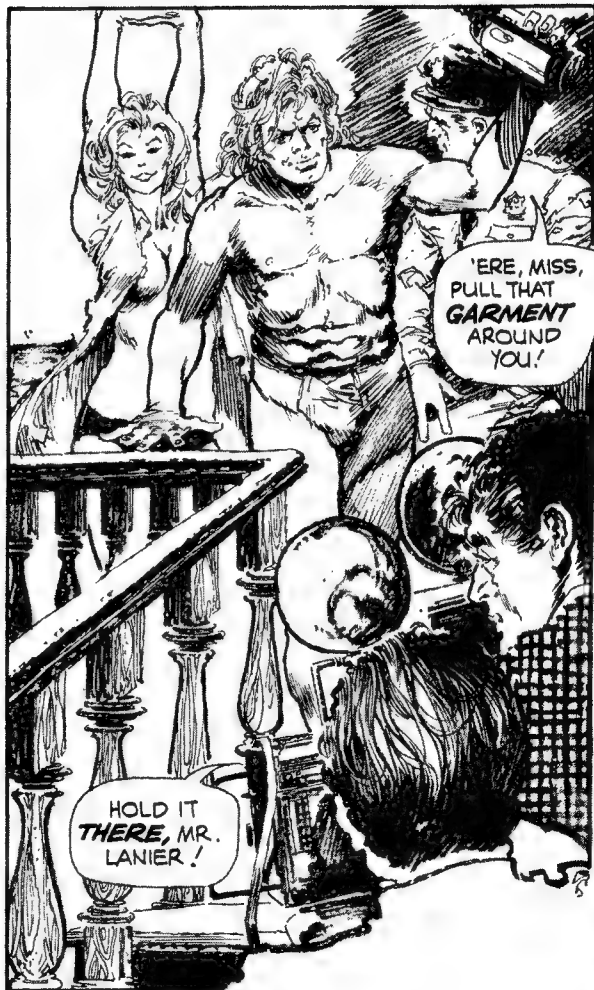
VAMPIRELLA RISES UP THROUGH THE WATER OF THE LOCH, UP THROUGH THE SEA WRACK, TOWARDS THE BLESSED SUNLIGHT AND THE AIR... BEARING THE **BODY** AND HEAD OF THE LAST OF THE MACDAEMON LAIRDS, TO LAY WITH HIS ANCESTORS.



YET FATHOMS **BELOW**, THERE WITH THE **CORPSES** OF MEN, WOMEN, AND A ROTTING SHIP, SHE HAS LEFT BEHIND A **STOLEN**, IRRECOVERABLE **PART OF HER-SELF!**

THAT PART THAT ONCE BELONGED TO **TRISTAN!**





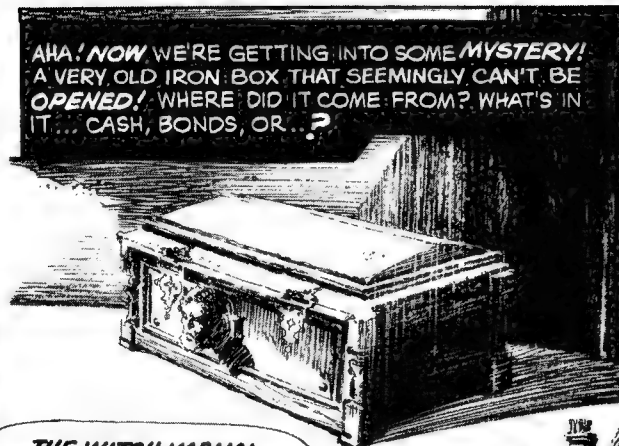
YOUNG LANIER, USED TO THE EASY LIFE, WITH A VERY **LIBERAL** ALLOWANCE, HAS NO **INTENTION** OF LEAVING THE LANIER MANSION EMPTYHANDED. LATER, AFTER HIS FATHER HAS LEFT FOR A BANK DIRECTORS' MEETING



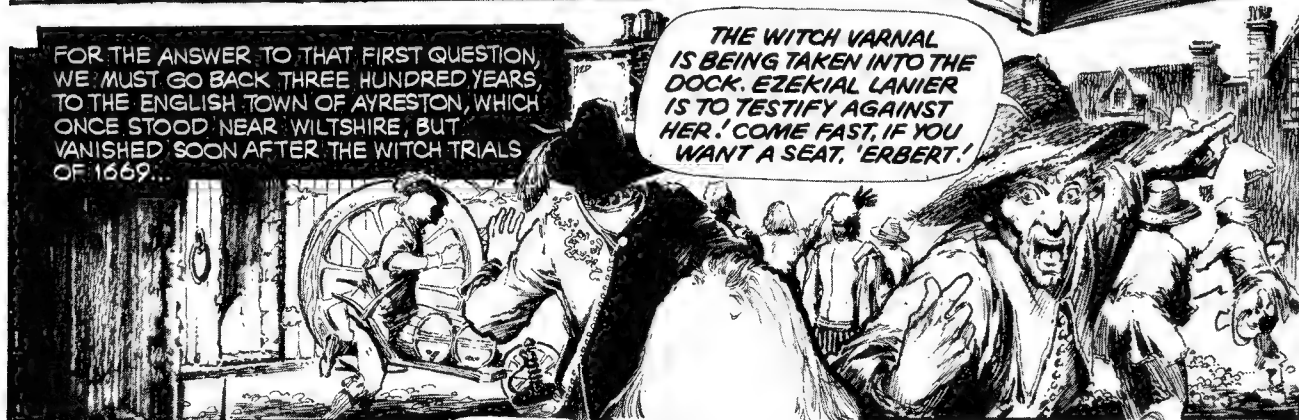


HE HAS **FORCED** OPEN THE ONE LOCKED DRAWER AND REMOVED A HEAVY OLD IRON BOX FROM IT...

I CAN'T FIND ANY WAY TO GET IT **OPEN**, CONFOUND IT... MUST BE **CASH** OR PERHAPS **NEGOTIABLE BONDS** IN THERE! I'LL TAKE IT WITH ME...!



AHA! **NOW** WE'RE GETTING INTO SOME **MYSTERY**! A VERY OLD IRON BOX THAT SEEMINGLY CAN'T BE **OPENED**! WHERE DID IT COME FROM? WHAT'S IN IT... CASH, BONDS, OR...?



FOR THE ANSWER TO THAT FIRST QUESTION, WE MUST GO BACK THREE HUNDRED YEARS, TO THE ENGLISH TOWN OF AYRESTON, WHICH ONCE STOOD NEAR WILTSHIRE, BUT VANISHED SOON AFTER THE WITCH TRIALS OF 1669...

THE WITCH VARNAL IS BEING TAKEN INTO THE DOCK. EZEKIAL LANIER IS TO TESTIFY AGAINST HER! COME FAST, IF YOU WANT A SEAT, 'ERBERT!



FETCH EZEKIAL LANIER, BAILIFF!

FILTHY OLD WITCH!

AYE, YER WORSHIP!



I HEARD OTHER PRISONERS PLUCKED OUT HER **EVIL EYE**!

NONSENSE! THAT PATCH IS OVER HER EYE ONLY TO KEEP HER FROM **BEWITCHING** THE JUDGE AND US JURYMEN!



MR. LANIER, WHAT WOULD YOUR WIFE SAY?

SHE'D SAY, **BLIMEY**, EZEKIAL, HIT'S BEEN A **LONG TIME**! **HAHA!**

HERE, HERE, MR. LANIER... INTO **COURT** WITH YOU!



PTUI!

THERE, YOU FILTHY LYING-THIEVING-LECHER... I **SPIT** ON YOU!

AND I'LL **SPIT** ON THE FIRE THEY'LL **ROAST** YOU IN!



SWORN IN, EZEKIAL LANIER
PROCEEDED TO BEAR **FALSE**
WITNESS AGAINST THE
ACCUSED...

TELL THE **COURT**
WHAT YOU SAW
LAST FRIDAY NIGHT,
MR. LANIER!

I SAW HER
STARE AT OLD
EDWARD CARVER
WITH THAT **EVIL EYE**
OF Hers... THEN ED
DROPPED WHERE
HE STOOD!

LIAR!



**WATCH YOUR TONGUE, MRS.
VARNAL!**

WHAT SAY YOU IN
YOUR OWN **DEFENSE**

**YOU MURDERED
ED CARVER AND OTHERS,
LANIER. YOU PUT
EVIDENCE NEAR THEM
TO POINT THE FINGER
OF GUILT AT ME!**



MRS. VARNAL WAS A SELF-
CONFESSED WITCH... BUT **NEVER**
BEFORE HAS A WITNESS CLAIMED
TO HAVE SEEN HER PRACTICING
THE BLACK ART...

I'VE MANY CASES
ON THE DOCKET. THE
JURY HAVE HEARD
ACCUSER AND
ACCUSED WHAT IS
YOUR **VERDICT?**

WE FIND THE WITCH
VARNAL... **GUILTY**
AS ACCUSED!



WITCH EMILY
VARNAL, I CONDEMN
YOU TO **DEATH BY FIRE**.
AT THE **STAKE!**

**YOU
MURDERED
THOSE PEOPLE,
LANIER... YOU
ROBBED THEIR
DEAD BODIES!**

**AND YOU'LL
BURN IN THE
SQUARE TODAY,
WITCH VARNAL!**



I'M SURE NO ONE
WILL MIND IF I TAKE THIS
BOX AS A **MEMENTO** OF
THE TRIAL!

VARNAL
WON'T BE HERE
LONG ENOUGH TO
PROTEST!

I KNEW HE'D
TAKE THE BAIT... I
JUST KNEW IT!

THAT NIGHT...



HO, WITCH VARNAL... I CAN'T OPEN THIS BOX YOU LEFT BEHIND! WHAT TREASURES DOES IT HOLD?

I CURSE YOU AND YOUR DESCENDANTS UNTO THE TENTH GENERATION, EZEKIAL LANIER!

I SWEAR BY SATAN THAT YOU AND THOSE WHO FOLLOW YOU, AND ARE EVIL, WILL LOSE WHAT THEY CHERISH MOST!

LET'S GO TO YOUR PLACE, MY LOVELY... I'LL **SHARE** SOME O' WHAT'S IN THIS BOX... IF YOU'RE VERY, **VERY** GOOD!

I'LL BE GOOD, ALL RIGHT... I **PROMISE** YOU THAT!

AND SOON...



OH, PUT THAT OLD BOX AWAY, LOVER. YOU CAN OPEN IT **LATER...**

HOLD ON... I PUSHED THE **RIGHT** STUDS! SHE'S OPEN!

EEEYAAAAA!



THEN EVIL EZEKIAL LANIER'S **TONGUE** AND **EYES** **WITHERED**. FOR THEY WERE WHAT HE TREASURED **MOST**. FOR HE WAS GROWING RICH BY **LYING** WITH THAT **TONGUE** ABOUT THINGS HE **SAW** WITH THOSE **EYES**, THEN STEALING THE POSSESSIONS OF THOSE HE **DOOMED**...

THAT WITCH'S CURSE DID WHAT SHE **PROMISED** IT WOULD! YOU'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I'M **BLAMED** FOR WHAT HAPPENED.



HE WANDERED THE STREETS THAT NIGHT, **BATTERING** HIMSELF AGAINST TREES AND HOUSES, TRIPPING... THEY FOUND HIM IN THE MORNING, UNCONSCIOUS...

HE WAS CLINGING TO THIS BOX, MRS. LANIER!



DOESN'T ANYONE KNOW WHAT HAPPENED..?

GREATLY AGITATED, MRS. LANIER NEVER REMEMBERED SHOVING THE MYSTERIOUS IRON BOX INTO SOME DRAWER, WHERE IT LAY FORGOTTEN FOR A COUPLE OF GENERATIONS, UNTIL THE DAY ONE **BARNABY** LANIER FOUND THE BOX...

DAMNATION, I SEE NO WAY TO OPEN THIS BLASTED BOX!

NEVER MIND THAT, LANIER. I DID A JOB FOR YOU! AMOS WALLER'S SHIP IS A FLAMIN' HULK IN THE HARBOR!

I PROMISED YOU £30, FORBES, AND £30 YOU'LL GET!

FIFTY, LANIER! DON'T CHEAT ME... YOU'VE SHIPS THAT CAN BURN TOO, Y'KNOW!

BURNING OUT A COMPETITOR MEANT EXTRA CARGO, AT **HIGHER RATES**, FOR **BARNABY**. HE COULD WELL AFFORD THE £50 HE PAID HIS 'HIRELING.' OH, YES, HE WAS AN **EVIL MAN**...

YOU'VE TAKEN A BIG CHANCE SAILING WITHOUT INSURANCE... SO LOADED DOWN...

LLOYD'S WOULDN'T INSURE MY SHIPS. FAIR ENOUGH. I'LL MAKE IT TO THE COLONIES... AND I'LL HAVE SAVED THE COST OF INSURANCE!

BARNABY TOYED WITH THAT METAL BOX. HE'D BROUGHT ABOARD SHIP. SOMEHOW, THAT NIGHT, HE TOUCHED THE **RIGHT STUDS**...

OH... MY GOD! GAAAAAGH...

SUDDENLY THERE WAS A **MOUNTAINOUS SWELLING** OF THE SEA, AND THE WIND **SHRIEKED**, RENDING THE SAILS ON ALL THREE OF THE LANIER SHIPS. AND THE ROARING, THUNDERING VICIOUSLY **POUNDING** MONSTER WAVES SPLINTERED THEM LIKE **MATCHWOODS!**



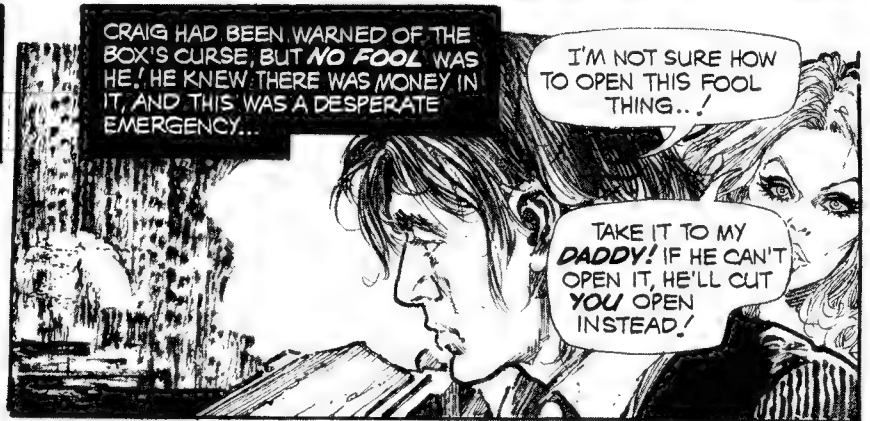


HOW STRANGE THAT THERE WAS NO LOSS OF LIFE ABOARD THE LANIER SHIPS THAT NIGHT. BUT THEN, WITCH VARNAL'S CURSE APPLIED **ONLY** TO **BARNABY**, WHO LOST ALMOST EVERYTHING...

...I'M GLAD YOU THREW THAT HORRIBLE IRON BOX AWAY, BETH. IT'S GOT A **CURSE** ON IT!

LET THE FOOL THINK I'VE THROWN IT AWAY. BARNABY'S GONE MAD. AND I'M SURE THERE'S **MONEY** IN THE BOX!

SO ANOTHER LANIER HAD PAID FOR HIS EVIL. BUT THERE WERE OTHERS. THERE WAS CRAIG LANIER, BACK IN 1872, A YOUNG MAN **PROUD** OF HIS **FINE BODY**...



CRAIG HAD BEEN WARNED OF THE BOX'S CURSE, BUT **NO FOOL** WAS HE. HE KNEW THERE WAS **MONEY** IN IT, AND THIS WAS A DESPERATE EMERGENCY...

I'M NOT SURE HOW TO OPEN THIS FOOL THING..!

TAKE IT TO MY **DADDY**! IF HE CAN'T OPEN IT, HE'LL CUT **YOU** OPEN INSTEAD!

MY DADDY'LL **KILL YOU** FOR WHAT YOU DID TO ME, MR. LANIER.

NO NEED TO TELL HIM **NOW**, IS THERE, SYLVIA? I KNOW WHERE THERE'S A **LOT** OF **MONEY** IN A **BOX**! YOU COULD BUY **ANYTHING** YOU WANT!



THERE, **THAT** DID IT!

OH... **NNNO!**

YOU 'AVE NO **MONEY**, 'EY... IS **THAT** IT?



YAAA!

I'M ALL **BLOODY**! I... I'VE BEEN...

HAHAHAHA! MONEY'S NOT THE **ONLY** THING YOU HAVEN'T GOT **NOW**..!

CRAIG WAS ONLY ONE MORE OF THE MANY WICKED LANIERS WHO SUFFERED BY THE **WITCH'S CURSE**. BUT ONE LOSER COUNTS. IS OUR PRESENT DAY LARRY LANIER AMONG THE TEN GENERATIONS **CURSED** BY VARNAL...?

I SAY, DON'T I KNOW YOU?

RECEP

WHY NOT? I'M CANDICE HADDON. **CANDY**. THERE, NOW YOU KNOW ME!





SUDDENLY THE BOX OPENS, AND YES, LARRY IS THE **LAST** OF THE LANIER LINE UNDER WITCH VARNAL'S CURSE...



SOMETHING IS HAPPENING TO LARRY THAT DRIVES STEELY SPIKES OF **TERROR** INTO CANDICE HADDON'S MIND AND BODY. THAT MAKES SOUR BILE RISE **INTO HER THROAT**, CHOKING OFF A SHRIEK OF DISGUST AND LOATHING...

GONE IS THE FRUSTRATED NYMPHOMANIAC **GONE** IS THE IRON BOX THAT HAS POWDERED TO RED RUST, AND **WITCH VARNAL'S** EVIL EYE THAT HAS TURNED TO **DUST!** THE 300-YEAR-OLD CURSE IS DONE WITH NOW, AND **GONE...** OH, GOOD LORD!... IS WHAT LARRY LANIER CHERISHED **MOST...**





IT **ENDS!** JUST LIKE IT **ALWAYS** ENDS!
JUST LIKE IT **HAS** TO END...

THERE'S
NO HOPE
FOR HIM,
DOCTOR!

HE'S
GONE!

MY
GOD!

...AND THEN, LIKE
ALWAYS, I **AWAKE!**

MY LIPS ARE **DRY...**
THERE IS A BITTER
TASTE IN MY MOUTH!

LIKE **ALWAYS**, THE
DREAM HAD BEEN
THE **SAME!** I DON'T
KNOW HOW MANY
TIMES IT HAS PLAYED
OVER AND OVER
AGAIN IN MY **MIND!**



BUT **THIS TIME**
SOMETHING IS
DIFFERENT...
MISSING...!

LIKE **ALWAYS**, I
RECALL THE DREAM
VIVIDLY!

BUT **UNLIKE** ALWAYS,
I RECALL **NOTHING**
OF **MYSELF!**



WHO AM I?

FOR THAT MATTER,
WHERE AM I?

WHAT **IS** THIS PLACE?
WHY IS IT SO **DARK?**

...SO **COLD...?**

...**LONELY?**

WHAT HAS **HAPPENED**
TO ME? WHY CAN'T
I RECALL ANYTHING?



THESE PAPERS...
THIS **BOOK...**
PERHAPS I CAN
LEARN SOME-
THING FROM
THEM!



THEY ARE ABOUT
A DR. FARLEY
FOSTER...



READY TO
EXPAND YOUR
HORIZONS AND
LEARN **MYSTIC**
SECRETS
THAT HAVE
BAFFLED MEN
FOR AGES?
THEN VENTURE
WITH A YOUNG
MAN WHO IS
ABOUT TO
DISCOVER THE
ONE... **TRUE...**

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN!

DOCTOR FARLEY FOSTER... THAT NAME... YES, I
REMEMBER NOW! I AM DR. FARLEY FOSTER!



THIS BOOK IS
ABOUT ME...

...ME AND
A GIRL...

...EVA!

IT'S ALL COMING
BACK! EVA...
BEAUTIFUL EVA...

...HER RICH GOLDEN
HAIR... LUSCIOUS
SEA-GREEN EYES...
WARM THROBBING
BODY...

...LOOKING FOR
LOVE...!

...LOVE THAT
I GAVE HER
WHEN I TOOK
HER FOR MY
WIFE!

BUT IT WAS NO GOOD! WRONG
FROM THE START! I LOVED HER...
WORSHIPPED HER... DID EVERYTHING
SHE ASKED OF ME... AND MORE!

BUT EVA'S BEAUTY WAS NOT
MEANT TO BE HOARDED BY
ONE MAN ALONE!

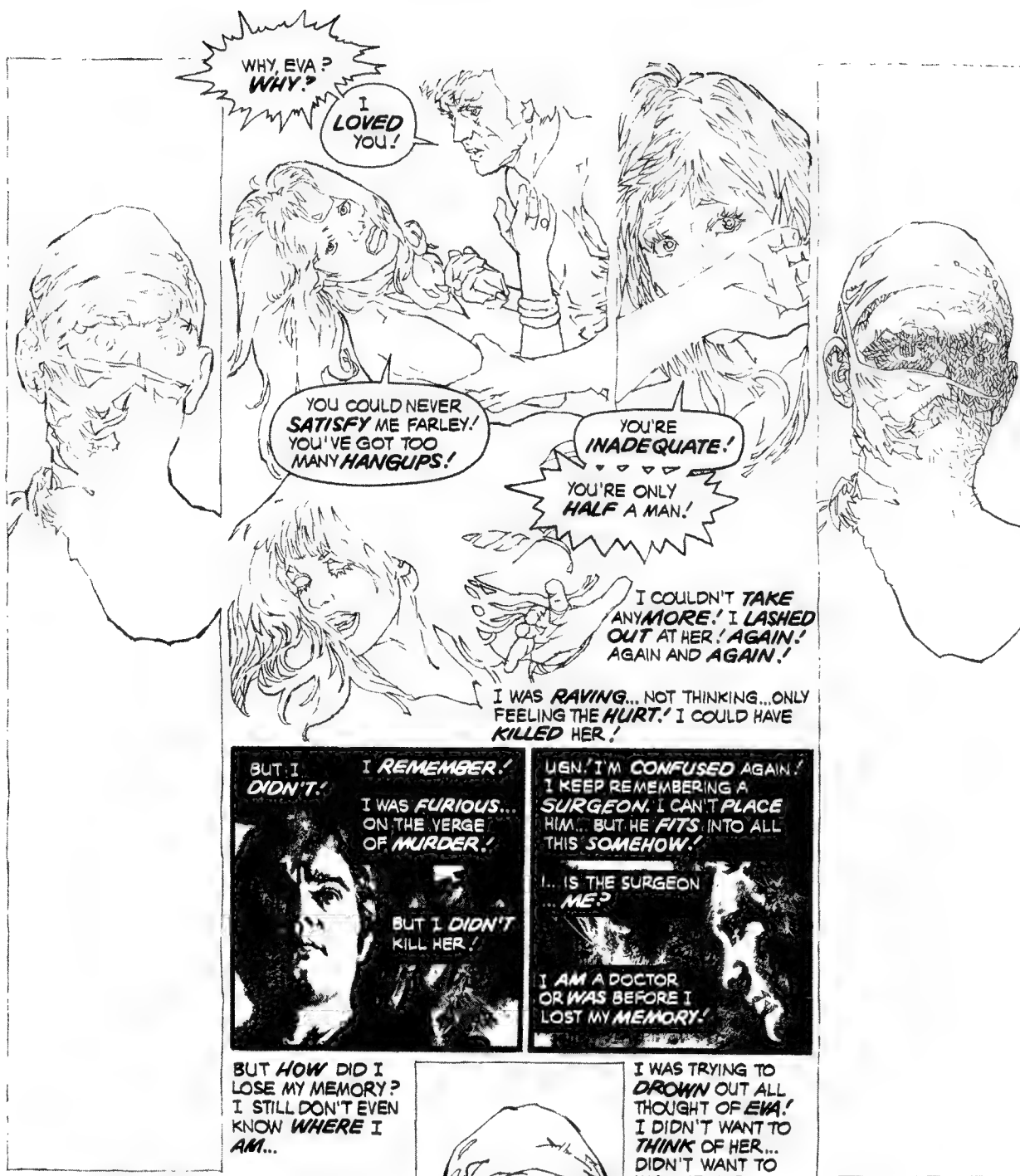
SHE SHARED IT
WITH MANY MEN!

...HOW I FOUND OUT
ABOUT ONE OF HER
AFFAIRS...

...HOW SHE TOLD ME...
TAUNTED ME, ABOUT
THE OTHERS!

THESE DAMNED
MEMORIES... FLOODING
MY MIND! IT WAS BETTER
WHEN I COULDN'T
REMEMBER! BUT I
RECALL IT ALL...!





WHY, EVA?
WHY?

I
LOVED
YOU!

YOU COULD NEVER
SATISFY ME FARLEY!
YOU'VE GOT TOO
MANY **HANGUPS!**

YOU'RE
INADEQUATE!

YOU'RE ONLY
HALF A MAN!

I COULDN'T **TAKE**
ANYMORE! I **LASHED**
OUT AT HER! **AGAIN!**
AGAIN AND AGAIN!

I WAS **RAVING...** NOT THINKING... ONLY
FEELING THE **HURT!** I COULD HAVE
KILLED HER!

BUT I
DIDN'T!

I **REMEMBER!**

I WAS **FURIOUS...**
ON THE VERGE
OF **MURDER!**

BUT I **DIDN'T**
KILL HER!

UEN, I'M **CONFUSED** AGAIN!
I KEEP REMEMBERING A
SURGEON. I CAN'T PLACE
HIM... BUT HE **FITS** INTO ALL
THIS **SOMEHOW!**

... IS THE **SURGEON**
... **ME?**

I **AM** A DOCTOR
OR **WAS** BEFORE I
LOST MY **MEMORY!**

BUT **HOW** DID I
LOSE MY **MEMORY?**
I STILL DON'T EVEN
KNOW **WHERE** I
AM...

I WAS TRYING TO
DROWN OUT ALL
THOUGHT OF **EVA!**
I DIDN'T WANT TO
THINK OF HER...
DIDN'T WANT TO
IMAGINE HER
ALONE WITH
OTHER MEN!

I REMEMBER **DRINKING...**

...**DRINKING A LOT.** MORE THAN I
SHOULD HAVE!

UEN! THE **SURGEON**
AGAIN! WHY DOES HE
KEEP **POPPING** INTO
MY **MIND...**?

I MUST HAVE GOTTEN PRETTY **SOUSED!**
... ONLY **VAGUELY** REMEMBER **SHAMBLING**
OFF...

I DON'T KNOW **HOW** I
GOT INTO MY **CAR**...

...I WAS **AIRBORNE**!

TWISTING...
BOUNCING...
CRASHING
DOWN THE
SIDE OF
A **CLIFF**!

I REMEMBER THE **WIND** WHIPPING IN THROUGH THE WINDOWS...

I **PUSHED** THE CAR TO ITS **LIMITS**... **SLAMMING** THE STICK
INTO FOURTH GEAR... **BEATING** HELL OUT OF THE ENGINE...!
I WAS TAKING OUT MY **HATE** ON A **MACHINE**, **PUNISHING** IT
FOR WHAT A **WOMAN** HAD DONE TO **ME**...! AND THEN... THE
INEVITABLE...

MY **BODY** FELT AS
BROKEN AND **TORN**
AS THE CAR'S...



NO!



THAT **CAN'T** BE
WHAT HAPPENED!

I **DIDN'T** DIE...
BECAUSE I'M **HERE**...
NOW...!

MY **BODY** WAS
CRUSHED... **RIPPED**
APART **INSIDE**

BUT...

BUT...



... AND I
REMEMBER...
SLIPPING OFF...

... INTO
DEATH!

... THERE WAS AN **OPERATION**!

THAT'S RIGHT, THE
SURGEON... IT'S
THE **SURGEON**
WHO **OPERATED**
ON **ME** AFTER
THE **ACCIDENT**...

I **DIDN'T** DIE!

I DIDN'T!!





THEY MUST HAVE LABORED FOR **HOURS...** CONNECTING **SEVERED** ARTERIES... NERVES, MUSCLES... **BONES!**

THE WAY I WAS **BROKEN UP**, THAT SURGEON HAD TO BE A **MIRACLE MAN** TO PULL ME THROUGH!



HE'S **NEVER** GOING TO **MAKE IT...**!

HE'S GOT **CHUNKS** OF THAT CAR **IMBEDDED** IN HIM!

HE'LL **MAKE IT!** WE'VE GOTTEN HIM **THIS FAR...** AND YOU SAID HE WAS **DEAD** WHEN HE CAME **IN** HERE.

HE'S GOING TO **MAKE IT** I TELL YOU! HE'S **CLINGING TO LIFE** LIKE HE'S GOT A WILL OF **IRON!**

NO, HE HAD TO BE A **GOD** TO PULL ME THROUGH...

...AND I **KNOW** HE WASN'T **THAT** GOOD!

I **DID** SURVIVE! I'M HERE! **NOW.. BREATHING LIVING!**

I PULLED **THROUGH** THAT GOD-AWFUL **WRECK!**

BUT, HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN **UNCONSCIOUS?**

I SEEM TO REMEMBER THAT DREAM ABOUT THE OPERATION... PLAYING OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN MY MIND...

HOW MANY NIGHTS... **DAYS...** DID I DREAM ABOUT IT...?



WAIT! THE OPERATION... WHERE ARE THE **SCARS** FROM THE OPERATION...?

FROM THE **WRECK?**



I... I SEEM TO BE AS GOOD AS **NEW!**

IT'S AS THOUGH THE WHOLE THING **NEVER HAPPENED!**

BUT IT **DID!**

I **KNOW** IT DID!



PLASTIC SURGERY? IS THAT WHY THERE'S **NO SCARS...**?

NO!

I'M A **SURGEON!** I CAN TELL A PLASTIC JOB A MILE OFF!

THIS IS MY OWN FLESH... MY OWN SKIN...

INTACT!

IT **CAN'T** BE...

UNLESS...

UNLESS...



UNLESS I REALLY **AM DEAD!**
THIS PLACE... THIS DARK,
MYSTERIOUS **NOTHING**
PLACE... IS **THIS** WHAT IT IS
LIKE TO BE **DEAD?**



SO ALONE... CONFUSED! DID I
DIE IN THAT **WRECK?**... ON THE
OPERATING TABLE?



WAIT! THE **BOOK...** THE BOOK
THAT TOLD ME OF **EVA...** THE
ACCIDENT! I **TOUCHED IT!** IT
WAS **REAL...** CONCRETE... **SOLID!**



CAN A **BOOK** EXIST IN THE
LAND OF THE **DEAD?** I'M **REAL...**
SOLID! WHY CAN'T A **BOOK** BE
SOLID, ALSO? OR WAS THE **BOOK**
A FIGMENT OF MY **IMAGINATION?**
... A SUBCONSCIOUS **STIMULOUS**
TO MAKE ME **REMEMBER!**? LIKE
THE PROVERBIAL **BOOK OF THE DEAD!**

GOD! **GOD!** I'M SO **CONFUSED!**
I DON'T **UNDERSTAND** WHAT'S
HAPPENING TO ME... I NEED TO
TALK WITH SOMEONE... **ANYONE...**
BEFORE MY HEAD **EXPLODES!**

I HAVE A THOUSAND **QUESTIONS!**

WHAT HAS **HAPPENED** TO ME?

WHERE AM I?

WHAT IS THIS **PLACE?**



CAN THIS BE **HEAVEN?**

... IS THIS
HELL?



... A KIND OF
LIMBO... A
NONPLACE FOR
LOST, WANDERING
SOULS... ?

... OR IS THIS
WHAT IT IS
LIKE TO BE
MAD?

HEAVEN HELP ME
IF I HAVE LOST
MY **MIND!**

NO... THIS ISN'T
MADNESS!
THIS IS ALL
VERY **REAL!**

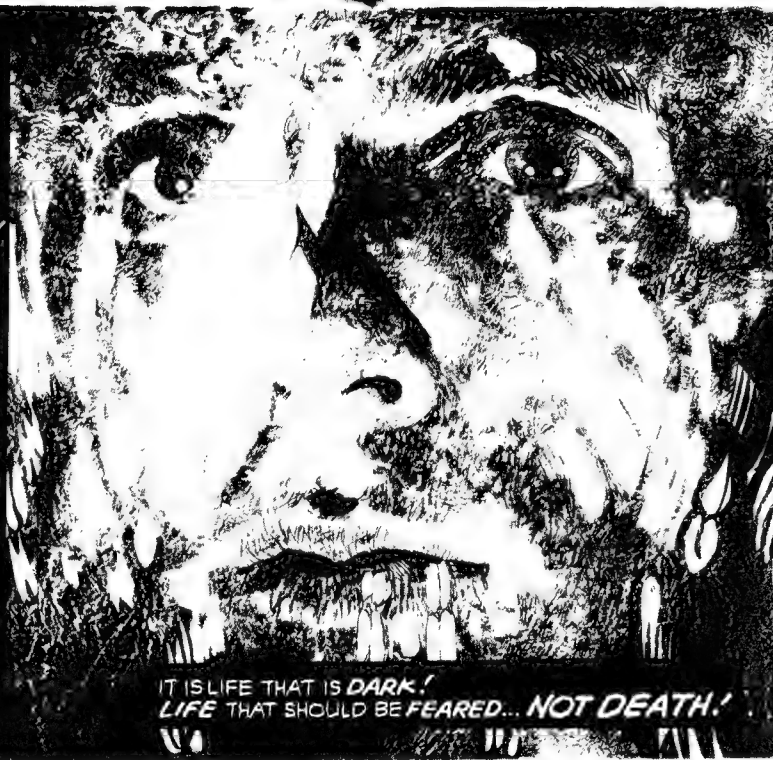
I FEEL AS
THOUGH I HAVE
GONE THROUGH
ALL THIS **BEFORE!**

IS THIS **INSTINCT**
TELLING ME...
ALL MEN
ENDURE THIS?

YES...! YES I
UNDERSTAND
NOW! THIS IS
AS **BASE...** AS
NECESSARY,
AS **BIRTH...**!

AS COMMON PLACE
AS **LIFE** ITSELF

THIS IS THE
FINAL
RECKONING!!



IT IS **LIFE** THAT IS **DARK!**
LIFE THAT SHOULD BE **FEARED...** **NOT DEATH!**

I AM **DYING...**
NOT **YET** DEAD...
BUT **DYING!** AND
THIS IS WHERE
I MAKE **PEACE...**

... NOT WITH MY
CREATOR OR
SOME **SUPREME**
BEING...

BUT WITH
MYSELF!

I UNDERSTAND
IT **ALL** NOW...

THOSE **LIGHTS...**
AHEAD OF ME...
DRAWING NEARER...
NEARER...

... IT IS THE **LIGHT**
OF **DEATH!**

DEATH IS NOT DARK
AND MYSTERIOUS, AS
MEN PORTRAY IT... IT
IS **LIGHT...**
BEAUTIFUL...
ETERNAL BLISS!

AND THIS DARK, **COLD** PLACE...
THIS PLACE THAT HAS **CONFUSED**
ME... **FRIGHTENED** ME...

THIS IS MY OWN
MIND!

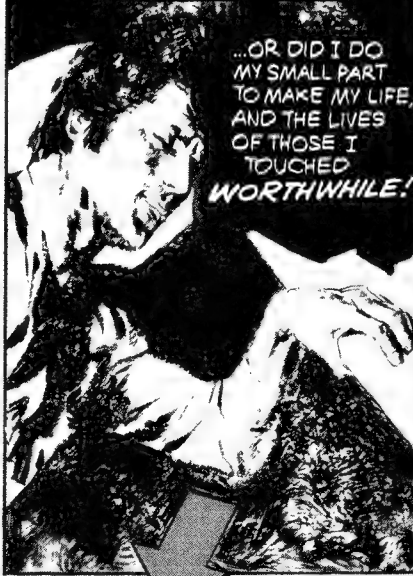
I MUST
ANSWER ONLY
TO **MYSELF**
FOR MY **LIFE!**



IT IS **HERE... NOW...** WHERE I
DECIDE IF MY LIFE HAS BEEN
WORTHWHILE!

DID I CREATE A **LIVING HELL** FOR
MYSELF... FOR **OTHERS** IN MY
LIFETIME?

...OR DID I DO
MY SMALL PART
TO MAKE MY LIFE,
AND THE LIVES
OF THOSE I
TOUCHED
WORTHWHILE!



I **UNDERSTAND** NOW! LIFE IS
ONE BIG **TEST!** IF YOU PASS
THE TEST... THIS **ONE MOMENT**
BEFORE DEATH... THIS **FINAL**
SELF-RECKONING, WILL BE
EASIER!

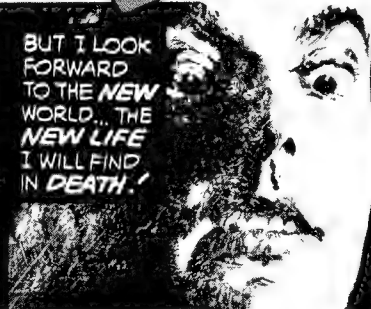
IF YOU **FAIL** THE TEST OF **LIFE**,
THEN I IMAGINE **THIS** IS THE
WORST **HELL** ANYONE COULD
GO THROUGH!



YES! YES, I
DID DO MY
BEST! MY LIFE
HAS BEEN
GOOD!

I HAD MY
HEARTBREAKS...
MY DISAPPOINTMENTS...
MY **SHORTCOMINGS...**
LIKE THOSE OF
ANY MAN! BUT
LIFE HAS BEEN
GOOD TO ME! I
WILL **MISS** IT DEARLY!

BUT I LOOK
FORWARD
TO THE **NEW**
WORLD... THE
NEW LIFE
I WILL FIND
IN **DEATH!**

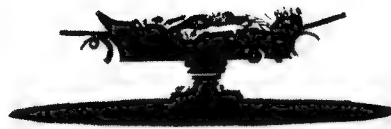


POOR **EVA!** I WONDER HOW SHE
WILL FARE IN HER **FINAL TEST!**

I SINCERELY HOPE IT IS **EASY** FOR HER
...BUT I CAN GO NOW...!

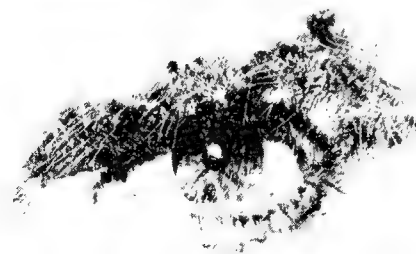
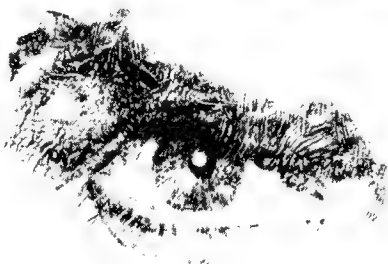
DEATH DRAWS NEAR... AND
I CAN **LEAVE** MY **MIND...** AND
RETURN TO WITHIN MY
WHOLE BODY...

...FOR THE
FINAL
TIME!



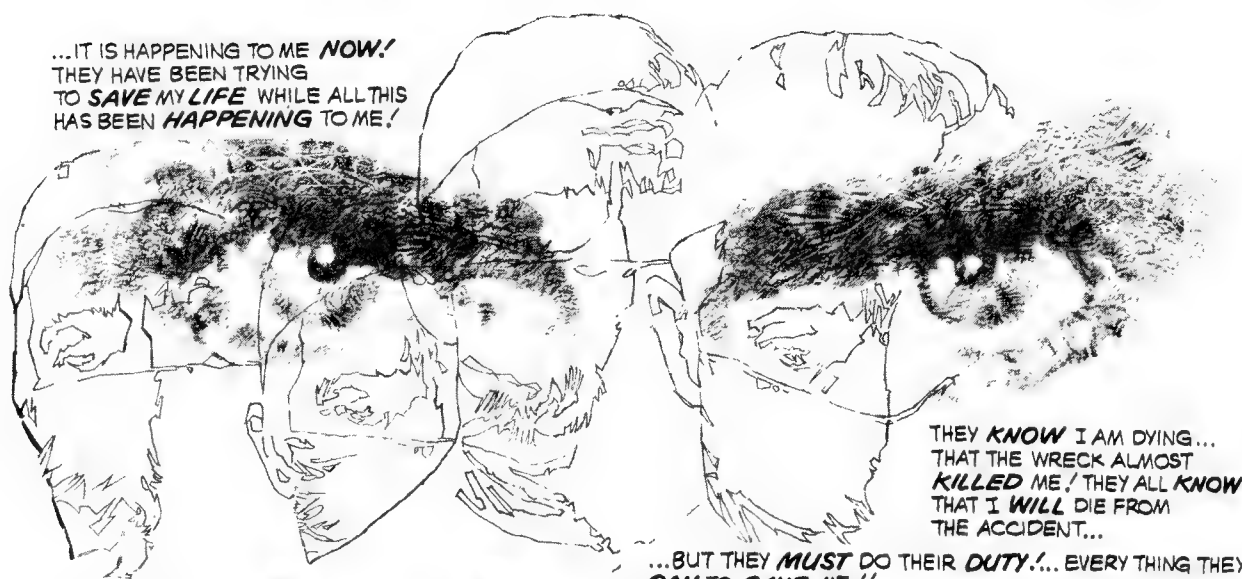
AH... I AM ON A **TABLE**
FROM THE **FEEL** OF IT... AN
OPERATING TABLE!

SO **THAT** EXPLAINS THE **DREAM!**



THE DOCTORS... NURSES... OPERATING ROOM!
IT **WASN'T** A DREAM AT ALL...

...IT IS HAPPENING TO ME **NOW!**
THEY HAVE BEEN TRYING
TO **SAVE MY LIFE** WHILE ALL THIS
HAS BEEN **HAPPENING** TO ME!



THEY **KNOW** I AM DYING...
THAT THE WRECK ALMOST
KILLED ME! THEY ALL **KNOW**
THAT I **WILL** DIE FROM
THE ACCIDENT...

...BUT THEY **MUST** DO THEIR **DUTY!**... EVERY THING THEY
CAN TO **SAVE ME!**

GIVE ME A **CLAMP!**
HURRY! THE MAN'S
BLEEDING TO
DEATH!

HE'S **SLIPPING**
OFF, NURSE!

BRING ME THE
HEART RESUSCITATOR.
QUICKLY!

GOD DAMN! WE
CAN'T **LOSE HIM**
NOW! MASSAGE
THE
HEART!

DON'T
LOSE
HIM...

AH... **DEATH!**
DEATH...

IT IS LIKE
BEING **BORN**
AGAINNN...

DON'T
LET
HIM...

... **DIE!!**

IF I COULD ONLY
TELL THEM THEIR
EFFORTS ARE IN
VAIN!

THE **LIGHT OF DEATH**
IS ALMOST **UPON ME!**

THANK YOU, DOCTOR,
FOR YOUR EFFORTS!
YOU'VE GIVEN YOUR
ALL!

BUT I'VE SEEN THE
BEAUTY OF DEATH...
...AND I AM **NOT**
RELUCTANT TO GO!

IN A CRAMPED OPERATING
ROOM... IN A LITTLE
ANYWHERE PLACE,
DEDICATED DOCTORS
AND NURSES LABOR
FEVERISHLY TO **SAVE**
A **HUMAN LIFE!**



THEY **KNOW** THE BATTLE IS **LOST!**... THAT
LIFE HAS COME TO AN END IN THIS MAN...
AT LEAST, LIFE AS **WE KNOW IT!**

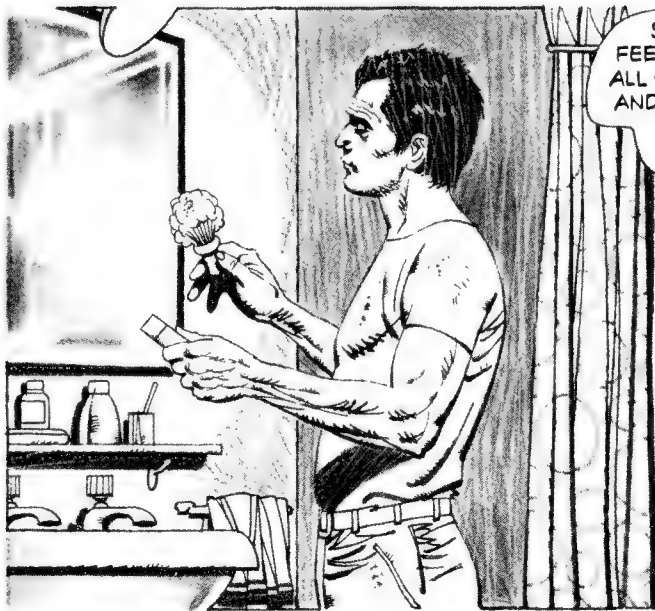
BUT BEING **HUMAN...** FALLIBLE... THEY
WILL LABOR ON FOR SOME MOMENTS
YET, **REFUSING TO GIVE IN...**

...HOPING TO OVER COME THAT
EVIL ENTITY, DEATH!

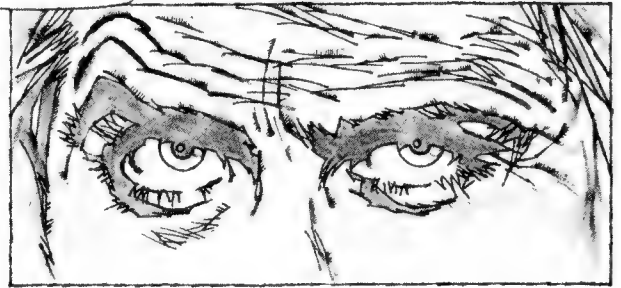


...IF ONLY THEY **KNEW...**!

IF ONLY THEY **KNEW!**



S'FUNNY...
FEEL A **DRAFT**
ALL OF A SUDDEN...
AND I JUST **SHUT**
ALL THE
WINDOWS...



AURALEON



LOOKS LIKE OUR
FRIEND IS IN A LATHER
IN MORE WAYS THAN
ONE OVER HIS
UNEXPECTED COMPANY
EH PUTRID PERUSERS?
BUT BEFORE WE
DETERMINE WHETHER
HIS HOSPITALITY WINDS
HIM UP IN THE HOSPITAL,
LET'S TURN THE PAGE TO
ALBERT DICKENS FOR
HIS STORY OF THE...

LAST LUNCH! FOR RATS!

I FAIL TO SEE WHAT **HAROLD PAPPIN** HAS TO DO WITH THIS MATTER, ALBERT, AND **FURTHERMORE...**

ANY **MORE FURTHER-MORES** AND YOU'LL **NEVER** SEE WHAT POOR HAROLD PAPPIN HAS TO DO WITH IT.

JUST **SLOW DOWN** AND LET ME **TELL** YOU...FROM THE **BEGINNING...**

"**TWENTY YEARS AGO** THERE WERE **SIX** OF US, ALWAYS TOGETHER, BUT POOR HAROLD PAPPIN WAS THE ODD ONE OUT... AND **SUFFERED** FOR IT..."

GO ON HOME TO YOUR **PET RATS**, HAROLD... THEY'RE JUST YOUR **SIZE**. YOU'RE TOO **SHRIMPY** TO PLAY WITH **US GUYS**!

"THEY **ALL** PICKED ON HAROLD, BUT MAX ROBBINS WAS THE BIGGEST BULLY. MAYBE I JUST FELT **SORRY** FOR HAROLD, BUT IT DIDN'T SEEM RIGHT FOR HIM TO COLLECT LUMPS MERELY BECAUSE HE WAS BORN SMALLER THAN THE REST OF US..."

MAX ROBBINS WAS RIGHT, IT TURNED OUT. I'D BEEN HELPING MY MOTHER WITH THE TOMATO CANNING ONE DAY AND WHEN I WAS DONE I WENT OVER TO CALL HAROLD. HE WAS IN THE YARD, CRYING HIS GUTS OUT..."

LEAVE 'IM ALONE, MAX... GO PICK ON SOMEONE YOUR **OWN SIZE** FOR A CHANGE!

LAY OFF YOU GOODY-TWO-SHOES! YOU CAN'T BE HIS GUARDIAN ANGEL **FOREVER!**

HEY, HAROLD... WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH YOU? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOST YOUR **BEST...**

I **DID**, ALBERT! I JUST LOST **EVERY LAST ONE** OF MY BEST FRIENDS...

...MY **ONLY** FRIENDS... NEXT TO **YOU**, ALBERT... THEY'RE **DEAD**, **ALL** OF 'EM! AND I KNOW WHO **DID** IT...!

YOU MEAN MAX ROBBINS AND THE OTHER GUYS...?

WHO **ELSE**, ALBERT... WHO **ELSE** WOULD **POISON** MY PET RATS?!

"HIS RATS WERE **STIFF** ON THEIR BACKS, THEIR PINK LITTLE FEET STICKING STRAIGHT UP A FEW FLIES BEGAN BUZZING AROUND... HAROLD JUST COULDN'T BRUSH 'EM OFF..."

" I CAN **STILL** REMEMBER HIS FACE NOW, TWENTY YEARS LATER, ALL TWISTED IN HURT AND PAIN AND MOST OF ALL **RAGE**..."

BUT THEY'LL **PAY**, ALBERT... OH, HOW THEY'LL **PAY**. I'LL **KILL** THEM, ALBERT, I'LL **POISON** THEM...

JUST LIKE THEY **POISONED** ME WITH THEIR **HATE**, AND MY **RATS**... WITH **DEATH**.

JUST YOU **WAIT** AND **SEE**!

" I TOLD HAROLD THAT HE WAS JUST **SPOUTIN' WORDS**, THAT HE SHOULD **FORGET** ABOUT IT... AND ABOUT TWO WEEKS LATER AS WE CROSSED THE MEADOW TO GRAZER'S POND IT SEEMED HE HAD..."

SURE IS A GOOD DAY FOR SWIMMIN', EH HAROLD?

GOOD DAY FOR **ANYTHING**, ALBERT... NO SCHOOL FOR THREE **MONTHS**!

" BUT I COULD **FEEL** THE FINE DAY **SOURING** FOR HAROLD AS WE TOPPED **WIDOW'S PEAK** AND SAW THAT MAX AND THE OTHER THREE GUYS HAD BEATEN US TO THE SWIMMING HOLE..."

STILL WANT TO GO **SWIMMIN'**, HAROLD? WE CAN ALWAYS GO BACK AND GET OUR **KITES**...

...SO LET'S GET IN THE **WATER**.

AIN'T NO **WIND**, ALBERT. BESIDES, WE CAME HERE TO **SWIM**, DIDN'T WE?

" I GUESS EVEN **I** HAD SOME OF MAX'S FEELINGS IN ME, BECAUSE IT JUST DIDN'T SEEM POSSIBLE THAT HAROLD'S LITTLE BODY COULD HOLD THAT MUCH **GUTS**, GOING STRAIGHT DOWN THERE INTO WHAT WAS SURE TO BE **TROUBLE** AS WELL AS WATER! AND SOMEHOW, I WAS **PROUD** OF HIM..."

" AND THE TROUBLE CAME BEFORE THE WATER..."

WELL, IF IT ISN'T **ALBERT** AND **RUNTY HAROLD**! HEY, ALBERT... WHERE YOU BEEN **KEEPIN'** LITTLE HAROLD? IN YOUR **POCKET**?

HEY, **PUNY HAROLD**!

YA SURE THOSE **ARMS** OF YOURS ARE **LONG** ENOUGH TO **SWIM** WITH, HAROLD?

" HAROLD PRETENDED NOT TO HEAR THE **CRUEL JIBES** AND **TAUNTS** HURLED AT HIM AS HE JUMPED INTO THE POND..."

LOOK AT **THAT**, GUYS... HAROLD MAKES ABOUT AS BIG A SPLASH AS A **MOSQUITO**!

SPLOOOSH!

THERE WAS SOMETHING IN MAX ROBBINS WHICH SAID HE JUST **COULDN'T** LEAVE POOR HAROLD ALONE. RIGHT OFF HE STARTED BY **DUNKING** HIM UNDER THE MURKY WATER...

WHATCHA **STRUGGLIN'** FOR, HAROLD? YOU WANTED TO GO **SWIMMIN'**, DIDN'T YA?

YEAH, HAROLD... EVERYONE **KNOWS** YOU GOTTA GET IN THE **WATER** TO **SWIM!**

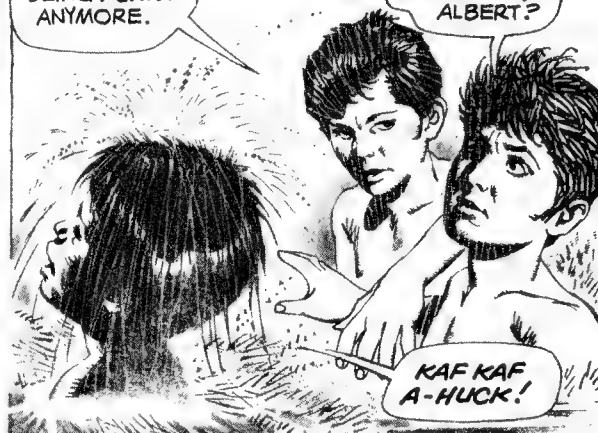


ONCE AGAIN, I HAD TO STOP MAX...

KNOCK IT OFF, MAX! YOU'RE NOT BEING **FUNNY** ANYMORE.

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! YOU **SURE** YOU AIN'T HAROLD'S **BIG BROTHER**, ALBERT?

KAF KAF A-HUCK!



THE WHOLE THING WAS MAX'S IDEA, OF COURSE, AND EVERYONE WENT ALONG WITH IT, AS KIDS'LL DO...

ALL RIGHT, YOU GUYS, LET'S HAVE A **CONTEST!** WE'LL SEE WHO CAN STAY UNDER WATER THE **LONGEST**.

IT'S A CINC **HAROLD** WON'T WIN... **HIS** LUNGS AIN'T BIG ENOUGH TO HOLD HIS BREATH FOR **TEN SECONDS!**



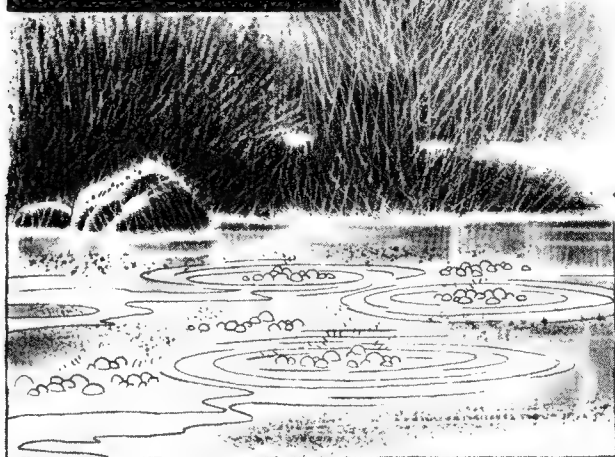
MAX **GOADED** HAROLD ON... UNTIL THERE WAS **NOTHING** HAROLD COULD DO BUT PARTICIPATE IN THE **CONTEST...**

YOU'RE NOT **SCARED**, ARE YOU, HAROLD? YOU'RE NOT **CHICKEN...**?

SHUT UP AND START YOUR **STUPID CONTEST**, MAX ROBBINS!



MAX COUNTED TO THREE AND WE ALL **SUBMERGED**, HOLDING OUR BREATHS UNTIL OUR CHESTS SQUEEZED PAIN AND WE SAW RED IN OUR MINDS...



THEN OUR HEADS BOBBED TO THE SURFACE LIKE A CLUSTER OF COCONUTS, GASPING AND WHEEZING FOR AIR...



"...ALL OF US *EXCEPT* ONE... *HAROLD PAPPIN*..."



HEY...! *HAROLD'S* STILL DOWN THERE! NEVER THOUGHT *HE* COULD HOLD HIS BREATH LONGER THAN THE *REST* OF US!

"BUT AFTER FOUR OR FIVE MINUTES MAX'S RELUCTANT RESPECT FOR HAROLD TURNED INTO A QUIET, CREEPING FEAR..."



HEY, HAROLD, YOU CAN COME *UP* NOW! YOU CAN COME UP NOW, HAROLD! YOU *WON* THE CONTEST!

"IN A *PANIC*, WE BEGAN DIVING FOR HAROLD..."



...BUT WE NEVER *DID* FIND HIM..."

"AND SO WE CRAWLED ONTO SHORE... AND MAX SOLEMNLY RECITED OUR COLLECTIVE PACT..."



AND WE *ALL* SWEAR NEVER TO TELL A WORD ABOUT THIS TO *ANYONE*! IF ONE OF US *DOES*, THE *REST* OF US GET TO BEAT HIM TILL HE'S *BLOODY*..."

"...A PACT I *IMMEDIATELY* *DISLIKED*..."

"...A PACT I ADHERED TO, ONLY TEMPORARILY! WHEN THE PHONE RANG LATER THAT DAY..."



NO, MRS. PAPPIN, I HAVEN'T SEEN HAROLD!

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN* YOU HAVEN'T SEEN HAROLD ALL DAY? YOU SEE HIM *EVERY* DAY, ALBERT DICKENS... AND YOU *CALL* HIM EVERY DAY AT THIS *TIME*!

NOW, THE *ONE* DAY HAROLD'S MISSING AND YOU *DON'T* CALL HIM...! SOMETHING'S MIGHTY *FISHY*, ALBERT DICKENS!

"...AND A PACT I EVENTUALLY **BROKE** UNDER THE FIRST OUNCE OF **PRESSURE**..."

IT WAS **AWFUL**, MRS. PAPPIN. **HAROLD WON** THE CONTEST. WE WAS DOWN BY **GRAZER'S POND** AND...

...AND WE HAD A **CONTEST** TO SEE WHO COULD STAY UNDER WATER THE LONGEST AND HAROLD'S **STILL** DOWN THERE....!



THEY **DROGGED** GRAZER'S POND ALL DAY FOR HAROLD'S BODY..."



"...BUT THEY **NEVER FOUND** HAROLD, EITHER..."

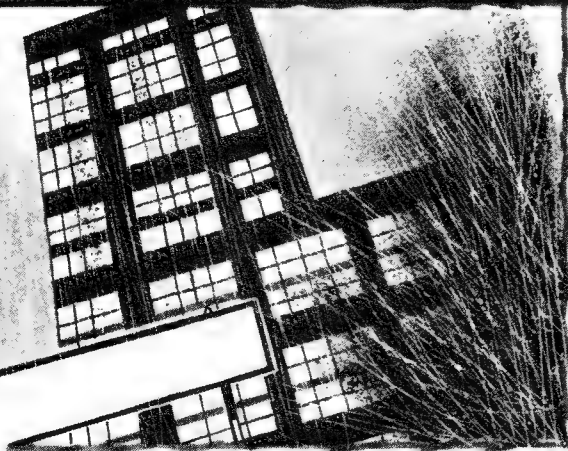


YES, I'M WELL **AWARE** OF THE STORY OF HAROLD PAPPIN, ALBERT... BUT I **STILL** DON'T SEE WHAT THAT HAS TO DO WITH...

"AS YOU KNOW, THE **REST** OF US... MAX, ME, RALPH FOULKES, HERB KNOWLES, AND GENE FARBER... WENT THROUGH **SCHOOL** TOGETHER AND UPON GRADUATION POOLED OUR **KNOWLEDGE** AND **FUNDS** TO OPEN A JOINT BUSINESS... THE **APEX CHEMICAL CORPORATION** OVER ON MAIN STREET..."



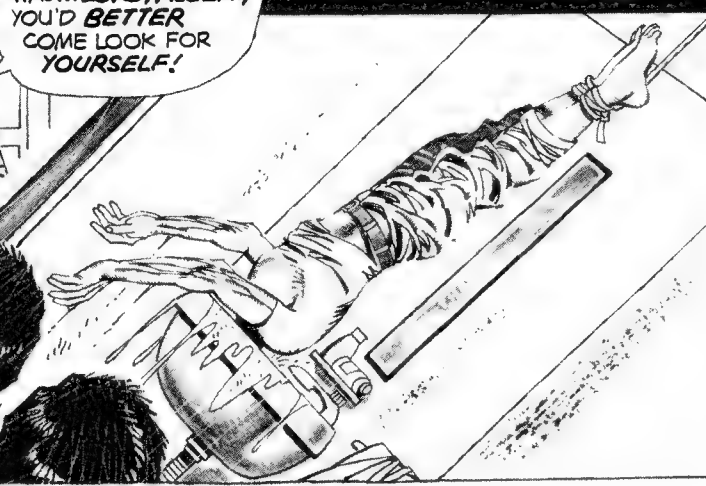
I'M **GETTING** TO THAT. JUST LET ME GO ON WITH WHAT I'VE GOT TO **SAY**...



"THAT BRINGS US UP TO LAST WEEK. **I** WAS IN THE STOCKROOM UNLOADING A SHIPMENT OF POTASSIUM CYANIDE WHEN **HERB KNOWLES** RUSHED IN WITH THE NEWS..."

ALBERT...! IT'S **GENE**...! I WENT TO PICK HIM UP AND HE WAS... **LORD, ALBERT**, YOU'D **BETTER** COME LOOK FOR YOURSELF!

"WE **RUSHED** OVER TO GENE FARBER'S PLACE AND **FOUND** HIM THE WAY HE WAS, **HUNG** BY HIS FEET FROM THE CEILING, WITH HIS **HEAD** IN THE BATHROOM SINK... **DROWNED**..."



"I GUESS IT WAS THE FACT THAT GENE HAD **DROWNED** WHICH **REMINDED** ME OF POOR HAROLD AND HOW I USED TO VISIT THE POND EVERY DAY FOLLOWING HIS DEATH..."

"COME ON UP, HAROLD... YOU CAN COME UP NOW, HAROLD..."

"I KNOW YOU'RE NOT DEAD..."

"RALPH FOULKES AND I FOUND **HERB** TWO DAYS LATER, **LYING** ON THE BOTTOM OF HIS POOL. THE LARGE **ROCK** ON HIS CHEST RULED OUT SUICIDE... AS HAD THE FACT THAT GENE FARBER'S **FEET** HAD BEEN TIED TO THE **CEILING**. BESIDES, **BOTH** MEN HAD BEEN OWNERS OF APEX CHEMCO... IT WAS A **PATTERN**..."



"AND THE PATTERN ENCOMPASSED **MORE** THAN THAT... IT EXTENDED BACK TO OUR **CHILDHOOD**, AND THE **DEATH** OF FOUR **PET WHITE RATS**..."

"THEY'LL **PAY**, ALBERT... I'LL **KILL** THEM... JUST LIKE THEY **KILLED** MY **RATS**!"

"RALPH'S DEATH YESTERDAY **CINCHED** IT. DON'T YOU **SEE**? HE WAS **STRANGLED** WITH A TOWEL AND **DROWNED** IN HIS BATHTUB... **DROWNED** LIKE THE **OTHER TWO**... **DROWNED** LIKE **HAROLD PAPPIN**, WHO HAD VOWED TO **KILL** ALL **THREE** OF THEM... AND **MAX**, TOO."



"IT ALL **FITS**! THE WAY HAROLD HAD **PROMISED** TO **KILL** THEM... AND THE WAY I KEPT YELLING FOR HAROLD TO COME UP..."

"IT ALL MUST HAVE WORKED TO BRING HAROLD UP FROM HIS **WATERY GRAVE**! HIS **SUPERNATURAL DETERMINATION**... HIS **LUST FOR REVENGE**... AND MY **PERSISTENT URGINGS**... MUST HAVE **PULLED** HIM FROM THE **WATER**..."

"I'LL **KILL** THEM... JUST LIKE THEY **KILLED** MY **RATS**!"

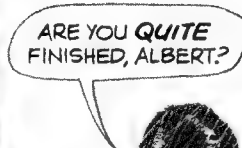
"COME UP NOW, HAROLD! YOU CAN COME UP NOW!"





...AND FORCED HIM INTO TOWN TO EXACT REVENGE ON RALPH AND THE OTHERS...

ACCKKKKK!!
N-NO! LORD,
NOOOOOOO!!



ARE YOU **QUITE** FINISHED, ALBERT?

NO! WHAT ABOUT THE **CHEMICAL WASTES** WE DUMP INTO GRAZER'S POND...? COULDN'T **THEY** SOMEHOW BRING HAROLD'S CORPSE TO LIFE!

AND **ONE** THING MORE... THERE WERE **FOOTPRINTS** AT THE SCENE OF EACH MURDER... **WET** FOOTPRINTS, WITH FLECKS OF **MOLD** CLINGING TO THEM...

THERE WILL BE **NO FURTHER** QUESTIONS, YOUR HONOR.

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT THE **DEFENDENT** ALBERT DICKENS IS **GUILTY** ON THREE COUNTS OF **FIRST-DEGREE MURDER**...

...MURDER COMMITTED WITH THE HOPES OF ACQUIRING **FULL OWNERSHIP** OF APEX CHEMCO FROM HIS SLAIN CO-OWNERS...

FURTHERMORE, I THINK THE COURT WILL ALSO RECOGNIZE THE DEFENDENT'S WILDLY CONTRIVED STORY OF A **WALKING CORPSE** TO BE A **FLAGRANT LIE** DESIGNED TO PROCURE A RULING OF INSANITY...

NO!!! IT ALL **FITS...** IT **MUST** BE WHAT HAPPENED!

THE SIZE OF A **YOUNG BOY'S** FOOTPRINTS!



NO!



MAX, YOU'RE **NEXT!** YOU **CAN'T** DO THIS, MAX! IT'S A **TRAVESTY** OF JUSTICE! YOU'VE KNOWN ME **ALL YOUR LIFE**, MAX!



YES, I'VE KNOWN YOU, ALBERT, AND IT **GRIEVES** ME TO PASS THIS SENTENCE UPON YOU.

BUT THE **EVIDENCE** LEAVES ME NO ALTERNATIVE. I SENTENCE YOU TO **DEATH... IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR.**

NO...! IT'S NOT FAIR! **YOU** COULD HAVE DONE IT, MAX! **YOU** OWN PART OF APEX... **YOU'D** HAVE THE **SAME** MOTIVES!



ALBERT, I DO **NOT** ALLOW MY **PRIVATE** BUSINESS HOLDINGS... SUCH AS MY ASSOCIATION WITH APEX CHEMICALS ...TO AFFECT MY JUDICIAL RULINGS...

NO....! NONE OF THE REST OF US WANTED TO DUMP THE APEX WASTES INTO GRAZER'S POND...IT WAS YOUR IDEA,MAX... TO SAVE MONEY!

AND IT'S BROUGHT HAROLD BACK, MAX, YOU'LL SEE. HE'S ALIVE, MAX--AND YOU'RE NEXT....

TAKE THE PRISONER TO HIS CELL TO AWAIT EXECUTION. THIS COURT IS ADJOURNED.

FOLLOWING THE ABRUPT ADJOURNMENT JUDGE MAXWELL ROBBINS DIVESTS HIS ROBES AND ADJOURNS TO HIS HOME, THE MOST LUXURIOUS ESTATE EVER TO ADORN THE SMALL TOWN...

NOTHING LIKE A COOL DRINK FROM THE WELL... SHOULD'VE HAD IT PUT IN YEARS AGO...

HMPH...! DOESN'T TASTE AS GOOD AS USUAL...

IN THE TOWN'S SOLE JAILHOUSE THERE IS AN OPEN DOOR, AN UNCONSCIOUS GUARD, AND WET FOOTPRINTS FLECKED WITH MOLD TRACKING THE FLOOR... FOOTPRINTS THE SIZE OF THOSE OF A YOUNG BOY...

...WET FOOTPRINTS WHICH LEAD TO AND FROM A CELL WHOSE CONSTRAINING BARS HAVE BEEN RIPPED WIDE... WIDE ENOUGH TO RELEASE A MAN...

AND AT THE SMALL TOWN'S MOST ELEGANT ESTATE THERE ARE MORE FOOTPRINTS! AND THERE IS A DEAD MAN, HIS TONGUE DISTENDED, SWOLLEN... HIS EYES BULGING BUT NEVER SEEING THE EMPTY, MOLD-FLECKED BOX WHICH LIES DISCARDED A FEW SCANT INCHES FROM HIS FACE...

LAST LUNCH FOR RATS
APEX CHEMICAL CORP.

FLIES BUZZ AND CRAWL AROUND THE DEAD MAN'S FACE. THERE IS NO ONE LEFT TO BRUSH THEM OFF. AFTER TWENTY YEARS, HAROLD PAPPIN'S RATS HAVE BEEN AVENGED!

TIME WORKS **CHANGES**...IT TAKES THE LIGHT OF DAY AND SNUFFS IT WITH THE DARK OF NIGHT. IT LISTENS TO THE CLAMOROUS SOUNDS OF PITCHED BATTLE AND BLANKETS THEM IN OPPRESSIVE **SILENCE**...

...AND IT SEIZES **LIFE**, MOLDS AND DIRECTS IT, AND GRINDS IT INTO **DEATH**...

EVEN WHEN TIME **FAILS** TO WORK ITS MOST CRUEL CHANGE OF LIFE TO DEATH, IT NEVERTHELESS **CHANGES** THAT OVERLOOKED LIFE...

CASE IN POINT...THE LIFE OF A SMALL **DRUMMER BOY** WHO HAS DESCENDED FROM THE HEIGHTS OF INTOXICATING **BATTLE** -**LUST** TO THE DEPTHS OF FERVENT SORROW AND **REMORSE**...

...AND OF LOSS, AND **LONELINESS**...

DEAD... ALL **DEAD**... I **KNEW** WE WERE... **BLOODY REDCOATS!**

THE BRITISH HAVE ALREADY **COME** AND PAUL REVERE'S TOLD OF IT... BUT IT TAKES A SMALL DRUMMER BOY TO PROCLAIM THAT...

THE VAMPIRES ARE COMING!
THE VAMPIRES ARE COMING!

THE CHANGE THE BOY WITNESSES IS AN AWESOME, **MYSTERIOUS** ONE. IT **MANIFESTS** ITSELF IN THE STIRRING CORPSE OF A BRITISH SOLDIER... A CORPSE WHICH RETURNS TO **PERVERTED LIFE** ...AND IMMEDIATELY SEEKS **SUSTENANCE** FOR THAT DEPRAVED LIFE...

WH-WHAT'S HE... **DOING**...! BENDING OVER THAT **BODY**... **KISSING** IT...?!

MOVING WITH RAPID, **FLUID** GRACE, THE ANIMATED CORPSE GLIDES FROM THE STILL-WARM BODY OF **ONE** CASUALTY...



...TO **ANOTHER**... PAUSING AT EACH ONLY LONG ENOUGH TO DRAIN STILLED **CONGEALED BLOOD** FROM DEAD VEINS...



...AND **HALTING** HIS SWIFT, METHODICAL VISITATIONS ONLY WHEN HIS UNHOLY **THIRST** HAS BEEN **SLAKED**...

...HALTING, AND **RISE** FROM THE LAST VICTIM OF TWIN RAVAGES: **WAR**, AND THE PREYING KISS OF THE **VAMPIRE**.

BY THE **SAINTS**... HE... HE'S BEEN **DRINKING THEIR BLOOD**...!

SATIATED... HIS ATAVISTIC BLOODLUST SHOCKINGLY **APPEASED**... THE DEPRAVED PARASITE **GLIDES** FROM THE BATTLEFIELD, MELTING INTO THE ENFOLDING WOODS.

HOW... HOW DOES HE MOVE SO **FAST**... AS IF HIS FEET BARELY TREAD THE **EARTH**...?!



THE YOUNG DRUMMER BOY UNDERSTANDS **LITTLE** OF UNFAIR TAXATION, OF COLONIES AND EMPIRES, OUTRAGED **KINGS** AND VOLUNTARILY EXILED **SUBJECTS**, OF TEA CAST INTO HARBORS OR **REBELLION** IN THE CAUSE OF **FREEDOM**...

...BUT HE **FULLY** UNDERSTANDS THE EFFECT OF **FEAR**...

...AND WHAT HE HAS **SEEN** THIS BLOODIED NIGHT WOULD INSPIRE FEAR WITHIN THE BREAST OF ONE **THRICE** HIS TENDER AGE...



...**FRANTICALLY**, IN A FUTILE ATTEMPT TO **PUMMEL** FEAR INTO THE GROUND WITH STAMPING, DRIVING FEET...

HE **RUNS**... HIS MIND **SHREDDED** WITH A THOUSAND RED THOUGHTS HIS DRUM CLUTCHED IN FORGOTTEN FINGERS, **INSTINCTIVELY**...

HE **RUNS**... **HALF** THE NIGHT... A NIGHT OF RUNNING, A NIGHT OF **FEAR** WHICH CLAIMS THE INEVITABLE TOLL OF HIS **STRENGTH**... AND HE **STAGGERS** FROM THE WOODS INTO A **CLEARING**...



BUNK!





HE'S
ALIVE.



HERE
YOU GO, LAD...
ON YOUR FEET

HAD A *ROUGH*
TIME, HAVE YOU?

THE *DEVIL*,
SIR... THE *DEVIL*
I SAW!



I IMAGINE
YOU'LL BE WANTING
THIS, SON...

THANK YOU, SIR...
IT'S THE ONLY THING
I'VE *GOT* NOW...

...NOW THAT
THEY'RE ALL
DEAD.

THE *DEVIL*
YOU SAY,
BOY?



YESSIR! *CHAD BOWMAN*,
DRUMMER BOY WITH THE THIRD
INFANTRY OUT OF LEXINGTON
REPORTING THAT I SAW THE
VERY *DEVIL* HIMSELF, SIR!

PLEASSED TO *MEET*
YOU, BOWMAN. I'M
LIEUTENANT NATE
ROBBINS...

NOW... HOW IS IT THE *DEVIL*
GRANTED *YOU* AN AUDIENCE?
I HEAR HE'S A PRETTY HARD
FELLOW TO *MEET*.



...AND THEN HE
FLOATED... BUT REAL
FAST... INTO THE FOREST.
AND THAT'S WHEN I *RAN*.



INTERESTING
STORY, BOWMAN...

YOU EVER HEAR OF *HALLUCINATIONS*? THE
NIGHT... A LOBSTER-BACK'S *RED* UNIFORM LOOKING
LIKE THE *DEVIL* HIMSELF... YOUR *EYES* PLAYING *TRICKS*
ON YOUR TIRED *MIND*?



NO... I SAW IT... *SIR*. I SAW A DEAD REDCOAT GET UP AND SUCK THE SOULS FROM OTHER SOLDIERS... AND HE DIDN'T CARE WHETHER THEY WERE *AMERICAN* OR *BRITISH*!

ONLY A MAN WHO'S HAD THE *DEVIL* POSSESS HIM WOULD DO THAT!

YOUR *IMAGINATION* SAW THAT... WHAT YOU *REALLY* SAW WAS A WOUNDED REDCOAT LOOTING CADAVERS!

NOW LISTEN, LAD... WE'VE NEED OF A GOOD *DRUMMER* BOY, NOT A *BABY* WHO HAS NIGHTMARES WHILE HE'S AWAKE.

IT WASN'T A NIGHTM...



THROUGHOUT THE LONG SLEEPLESS NIGHT CHAD BOWMAN *RESPECTED* LIEUTENANT ROBBIN'S ORDERS, REMAINING *SILENT* ABOUT HIS NEAR-ENCOUNTER WITH THE VAMPIRE...



THAT'S *ENOUGH*, BOWMAN. WE MOVE OUT TO MEET THE *BRITISH TOMORROW* ... IF YOU'RE *DRUMMING* WITH US, YOU'LL NOT BE *WHIMPERING* TO US ABOUT THE *DEVIL*!

YES... *SIR*...

THROUGHOUT THE TEDIOUS DAY'S TREK *STILL* HE HOLDS HIS TONGUE...



...THOUGH THE UNSPOKEN WORDS THREATEN TO *CHOK*E HIM.



AND *NOW*, AT *DAWN*, THE *DRUMMER* BOY *SUSTAINS* THAT SILENCE...

ALL RIGHT -- WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE *FAST* TO CUT THE REDCOATS OFF AT THE CROSSROADS.

AND DURING THE *WAIT*, THE INTERMINABLE PERIOD SPENT ON A HILL WAITING FOR THE SUN TO BURNISH *POLISHED BRASS* IN THE DISTANCE... FOR *SCARLET* UNIFORMS ON THE MARCH... HE REMAINS *SILENT*...



ALL RIGHT... HERE THEY ARE. LET'S SHOW THE *KING'S* MEN HOW *FREE* MEN FIGHT!

EVEN DURING THE **BATTLE** HE REMAINS SILENT... BUT THOUGH HE DRUMS HIS **BEST**, HIS MIND IS **NOT** ON BOOSTING THE CONTINENTAL TROOPS' MORALE WITH HIS STACCATO SNARE...

DISTRACTEDLY, HE EXPERIENCES THE BATTLE, SCARCELY **NOTICING** THE BRITISH COMPANY'S RIGID MILITARY FORMATION... OR THE LACK OF **ANY** FORMATION AMONG HIS **OWN** MEN...

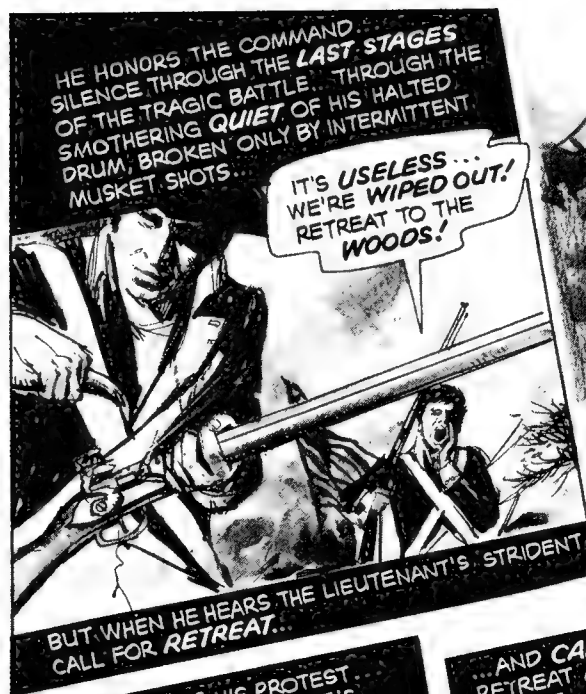


BRIEFLY, **FUTILELY**, HE ATTEMPTS TO **CONFIN** HIS THOUGHTS... TO CHANNEL HIS ENTIRE **CONSCIOUSNESS** INTO THE STIRRING TATTOO OF HIS **DRUM**

BUT **ALWAYS**, HIS THOUGHTS **BULLET** BACK TO **DEVIL** ON A DARKENED **BATTLEFIELD**... AND TO THE LIEUTENANT'S IMPOSED **SILENCE**...

THROUGH THE **MASSACRE**... THROUGH THE INCREDIBLY BRIEF TIME REQUIRED TO **ERASE** THE EXISTENCE OF OVER **SIXTY** MEN WITH ACRIDLY FUMING MUSKET AND RIFLE... HE **CONTINUES** TO HONOR THE COMMAND TO **SILENCE**...





HE HONORS THE COMMAND SILENCE THROUGH THE **LAST STAGES** OF THE TRAGIC BATTLE... THROUGH THE SMOOTHERING **QUIET** OF HIS HALTED DRUM, BROKEN ONLY BY INTERMITTENT MUSKET SHOTS...

IT'S **USELESS**... WE'RE **WIPE**D OUT! RETREAT TO THE **WOODS**!

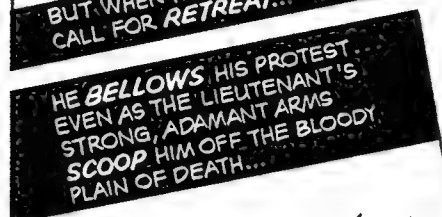
BUT WHEN HE HEARS THE LIEUTENANT'S STRIDENT CALL FOR **RETREAT**...



...HE **BREAKS** THE COMMAND TO SILENCE...
...AND **BELLOWS**!

NOOOO!
NOT INTO THE **WOODS**!

THAT'S WHERE I SAW THE **DEVIL**...



HE **BELLOWS** HIS PROTEST EVEN AS THE LIEUTENANT'S STRONG, ADAMANT ARMS **SCOOP** HIM OFF THE BLOODY PLAIN OF DEATH...



...AND **CARRY** HIM IN A FRANTIC RETREAT **PIERCING** THE DENSE FOREST...

BLAM BAM
BA-LAM

NOT THE **WOOOOOO**DSSS...!!

SHUT UP, BOY!



NO...NOOOOO!



...AND **PENETRATING** DEEPLY INTO THE THICKLY-SET TREES AND FOLIAGE...



BETTER TO **DIE** BY THE **BRITISH** THAN THE **DEVIL**...



WE **HAD** TO RETREAT, BOY, AND **DEVIL** OR **NO**... A RETREAT ISN'T MADE BY CHARGING **INTO** THE ENEMY'S FIRE...

NOW STOP YOUR **SNIVELING** ABOUT THE BLOODY **DEVIL**!

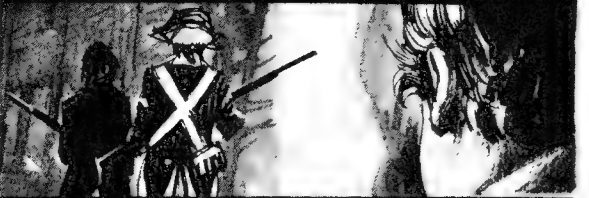
AND **DARKNESS**...



THAT *WASN'T*
A *PLEASANT* SOUND,
LIEUTENANT!

YOU'D BETTER
STAY WITH THE BOY
WHILE WE
INVESTIGATE
IT...

NOW, AS THE TWO INFANTRYMEN SLIP INTO THE
TANGLED GANGLION OF SHRUBBERY, THE DRUMMER
BOY FINDS THAT *SILENCE* IS THE *ONLY* ACTION
HIS TAUNTENED NERVES CAN *BEAR*...



AND THE *FEAR* WHICH *GRIPS* HIM IS NOT FOR THE
MEN'S *LIVES*... BUT FOR THEIR *SOULS*...

... A FEAR WHOSE *BASIS* IS AGONIZINGLY *ROOTED* IN THE
DEMENTED CACOPHONY OF TWIN *SHRIEKS*...

YAAAAAHYHYHYHY!
AAAAIIIEEEEE!



... AND A FEAR WHICH IS *INTENSIFIED*
BY THE SOUNDS WHICH *FOLLOW*...
SOFT SOUNDS ECHOED IN *HELL*...

THEN... THE *VIOLENT* ERUPTION THROUGH *EXPLODING* LEAVES...
A HURLING FORM IN BRITISH UNIFORM, EYES FERALLY *GLEAMING*,
MOUTH CONTORTED IN A BLOODY SNARL SPROUTING WICKEDLY
BARBED *FANGS*...

... *SUCKING*
SOUNDS...



NO... IT...
CAN'T BE...

...A FORM WHICH **BURSTS** INTO THE CAMPSITE CLEARING, AND ADVANCES ON LIEUTENANT NATE ROBBINS...

...**RELENTLESSLY**, IMPERVIOUS TO THE STARK CRACK OF A FRENZIEDLY DISCHARGED MUSKET...



THE VAMPIRE **LUNGES**. HIS LOATHSOME FANGS **PUNCTURE** PREGNANT VEINS...

...AND LIEUTENANT NATE ROBBINS **SCREAMS**...

...IN **BELIEF**...

...A BELIEF **SPAWNED** IN HIS DEATH.



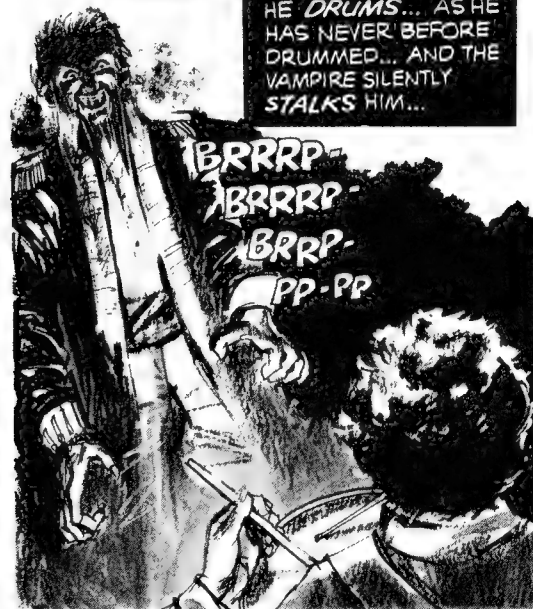
DRAINED OF **BLOOD**, LIEUTENANT ROBBINS IS NO LONGER OF **CONCERN** TO THE NOCTURNAL FIEND... AND SO, HIS CORPSE IS CARELESSLY CAST **ASIDE**...



...AS THE VAMPIRE FIXES ITS AVID GAZE ON A PETRIFIED **DRUMMER BOY**...

...A BOY WHO HAS NEVER KNOWN HOW TO DO ANYTHING BUT **DRUM** IN THE FACE OF DANGER...

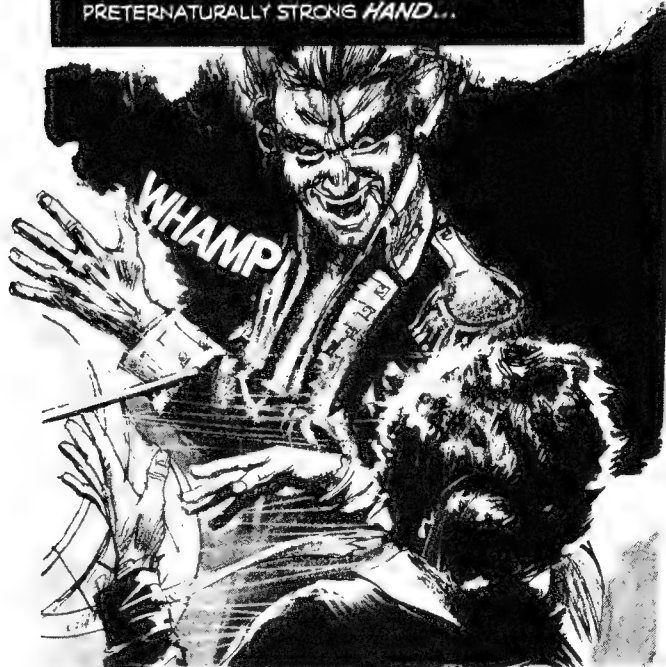
HE **DRUMS**... AS HE HAS NEVER BEFORE DRUMMED... AND THE VAMPIRE SILENTLY **STALKS** HIM...



HIS STICKS **RIPPLE** OVER THE STRETCHED SKIN OF HIS INSTRUMENT UNTIL THE ROLLING THRUM **FILLS** THE FOREST... AND SEEMS TO **SHAKE** THE VERY **OAKS**...



HE **DRUMS**...UNTIL THE VAMPIRE **STOPS** HIS DRUMMING...WITH THE BRUTAL SLAP OF A PRETERNATURALLY STRONG **HAND**...



KLAK-TIK

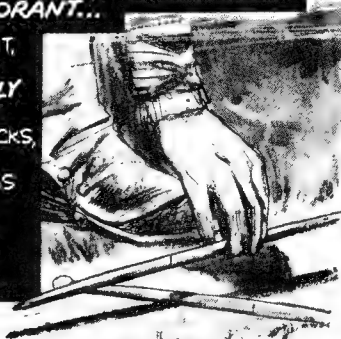
FALLEN DRUMSTICKS...**FATE**...TO DEBILITATING EFFECT OF THE **CROSS**...

...AN EFFECT STEEPED WITH A SIGNIFICANCE THE VAMPIRE **FEELS**...LIKE **ACID** SPLASHED **SEARING** IN HIS FACE...



BUT AN EFFECT TO WHICH THE **DRUMMER BOY** IS **IGNORANT**...

AND, IGNORANT, HE CLUTCHES **DESPERATELY** FOR THE PRECIOUS STICKS, THE ONLY THINGS HE HAS **LEFT**: HE **DESTROYS** THE **ERSATZ CRUCIFIX**...



...AND CONFIDENCE **RESTORED**, THE VAMPIRE **SURGES** TOWARD ITS **EASY PREY**...

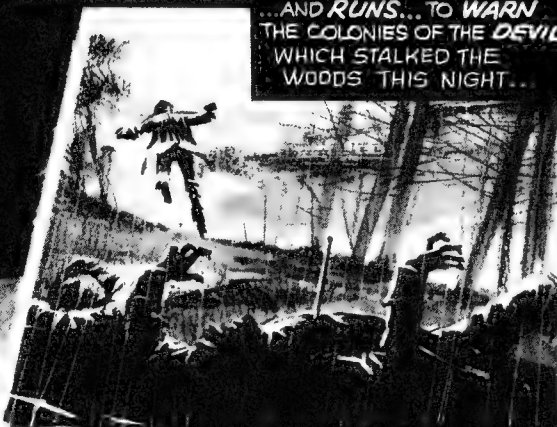


...ONLY TO **IMPALE** ITSELF ON THE **LETHAL DRUMSTICK**...
A DRUMSTICK OF **WOOD**, NOT UNLIKE A **SHARPENED STAKE**...



THE TERRIFIED DRUMMER BOY KNOWS **LITTLE** OF VAMPIRES AND WOODEN STAKES...BUT, SENSING **DEATH** IN THE **HELLISH**, **IMPALED** FORM ABOVE HIM, HE **PULLS** HIMSELF FROM UNDER THE **BLOOD BEAST'S CORPSE**...

...AND **RUNS**...TO **WARN** THE COLONIES OF THE **DEVIL** WHICH STALKED THE **WOODS** THIS NIGHT...



HE DOES NOT KNOW THAT NO ONE WILL BELIEVE HIM... UNTIL THE **LATE** **LIEUTENANT**, **NATE ROBBINS**, **RETURNS** FROM HIS **LAST BATTLE**...

ONLY **THEN** WILL PEOPLE **BELIEVE**...

...THAT THE **VAMPIRES** ARE COMING!

TWO VAMPIRELLA'S STUN 5,500 AT 1973 COMIC ART CONVENTION

By Gerry Boudreau

Together for the first time... Cheech Wizard, Big Barda, the Demon, Batman, the Ghost Rider, Ming the Merciless, Spiderman, Two-Face, Elric, Mr. Mind, and not one but two devastating VAMPIRELLAS! Where did this historic congregation take place? In some secret secluded fortress in the Arctic? In the warped imagination of some desperate comic book writer? No, at the Hotel Commodore, on East 42nd Street in downtown New York City.

The occasion was the Sixth Annual New York Comic Art Convention, high-

lighted by a colorful costume parade which, in imagination and splendor, rivals the Macy's Thanksgiving Day outings! (Well, almost!)

Although first prize honors went to Corlandt Hull as Ming the Merciless, who captured the image of the villainous tyrant flawlessly, it was undoubtedly the two Vampirellas who captured the hearts of the 5500 fans gathered for the five-day affair.

The first of them was a well-proportioned brunette actress, known professionally as **Destiny**, who is as ravishing as **Vampi** herself. The other was everybody's favorite fan, 14½ year old **Heidi Saha**, whose distinguished costume was one of the three grand-prize winners.

Judges for the event were artists **Jeff Jones**, **Sergio Aragones** and **Tom Fagan**, chairman of the annual Halloween parade in Rutland, Vermont... which is also known for its influx of bizarre and colorful costumes: Their task was made especially difficult by the number of unique and worthy entries which included, in addition to the already mentioned comic luminaries, the golden age Green Lantern, the Joker, J. Jonah Jameson, The Marquis deSaad, Darkseid and the Juggernaut.

Among the other highlights of the Fourth of July convention was a panel on war comics, specifically **Warren Magazines' Blazing Combat**. The panel featured artist **Russ Heath**, writer-editor of **Blazing Combat Archie Goodwin**, and publisher **James Warren** himself. The panel explored the attitude of the public toward war (or anti-war) comics at the time, and explained several of the factors behind the magazine's untimely demise. This was augmented by a slide show featuring the art of **Russ Heath**, and projected a number of original pages from the magazine before its appreciative audience.

Another panel brought the industry's writers to the fore to reveal all the professional secrets they had promised themselves they would never tell. These included **Warren** writers **Steve Skeates**, **Marty Pasko**, **Gerry Boudreau** and **John David Warner**, along with the industry's other veterans... **Mike Friedrich**, **Steve Englehart**, **Elliot Maggin**, and **E. Nelson Bridwell**.

Also included in the five day program were a number of films which delighted both comic and science-fiction fans. These included the **Beatles'** animated feature "Yellow Submarine", **Stanley Kubrick's** "2001: A Space Odyssey", **The Marx Brothers** "Room Service" and several vintage science fiction flicks: "The Day the Earth Stood Still", "Three Worlds of Gulliver", **George Pal's** "War of the Worlds", "King Kong", and the original **Batman** serial.

Intermingled with these outstanding events were seminars, panels, auctions, exhibits, and the usual buying and selling of comic magazines, one of the most overlooked but most important functions of the conventions.

The conventions themselves originated some six years ago when Brooklyn

comics dealer **Phil Seuling** created the first Annual New York Comic Art Convention for an attending 750 people. Now the attending membership has grown to 5500, with thousands of supporters unable to be there in person.

Who knows—next year there may be fifty VAMPIRELLAS appearing in the costume parade! If they are nearly as impressive as this year's entries (and I'm sure they will be), you are likely to see 5500 comic fans with bloodshot eyes when you consider the stares that only two drew!



Miss Angelique Trouvere, actress-turned-vampire, uses the stage name, **Destiny**. When she appeared in her VAMPIRELLA costume at the 1973 Comic Art Convention, she was the hit of the show!

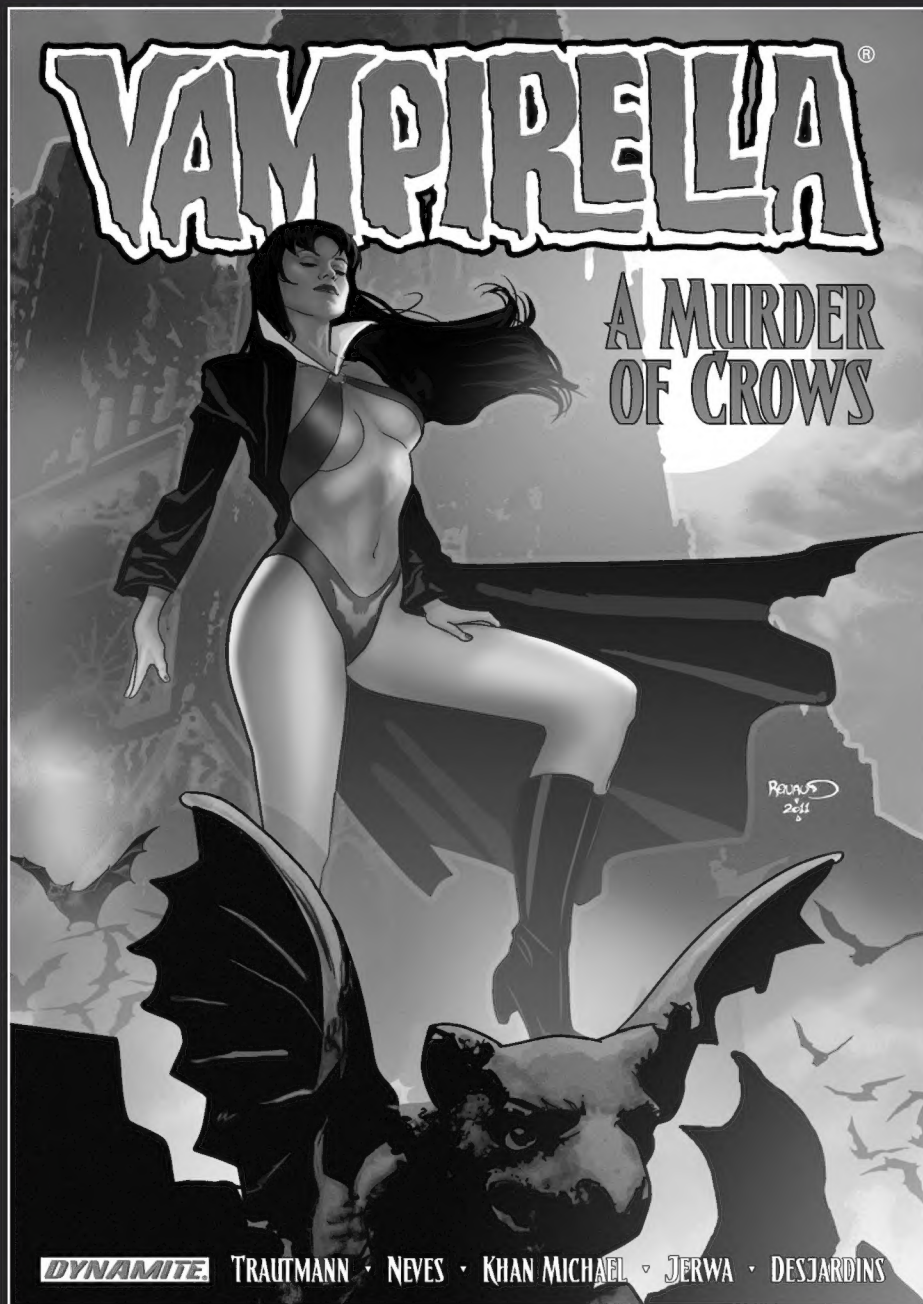


Miss Heidi Saha, a 14½-year-old comic fan, caused quite a stir at the Hotel Commodore when she made her entrance in her award-winning VAMPIRELLA costume. It was like having Vampi come to life!

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...CONTINUED FROM INSIDE FRONT COVER

THE POPULAR WESTERN EUROPEAN CONCEPT OF A VAMPIRE... THE ONE STOKER ADHERED TO IN HIS *DRACULA* NOVEL... ALLOWS THAT THE VAMPIRE MAY *CHANGE* FORM.

IT CAN BECOME A GREAT CAT, A BAT, OR RETAIN ITS HUMAN FORM!

OVER INTO *EASTERN EUROPE* A WAYS, *ROMANIANS* CALL THE VAMPIRE *STRIGOI*. THE *STRIGOI* ARE OBSCURE DEVIL *BIRD-MEN*! THEY FLY ONLY AT SUNSET, HYPNOTIZE THEIR VICTIMS... AND *EAT* HUMAN FLESH, WATERING IT DOWN WITH *BLOOD*!

AND OVER IN *RUSSIA*... CHILDREN HAVE BEEN TAUGHT FOR CENTURIES, TO FEAR *YORI*, THE NOTORIOUS CHILD-THIEF...!

SHE THEN *DRAINS* THE CHILD OF ALL IT'S *BLOOD*! WHAT THIS ACCOMPLISHES IS UNCLEAR! BUT THE LEGEND MUST SCARE *HELL* OUT OF DISOBEDIENT *RUSSO* KIDS!

AS THE LEGEND GOES, *YORI* WHISKS AWAY BAD LITTLE CHILDREN IN THE DEAD OF *NIGHT*!

YORI HAS BEEN CAUGHT AND KILLED MANY TIMES! BUT ACCORDING TO THE LEGEND, SHE STILL *LIVES ON*... AS A GOOD VAMPIRE MUST!

ONE OF THE STRANGEST VAMPIRE LEGENDS COMES OUT OF *CHINA*!

THE *CHINESE* TELL OF FIVE BROTHERS WHO CONTRACTED A WEIRD *DISEASE*!

THE SICKNESS DROVE ALL FIVE OF THE BROTHERS *MAD*! THEY SOUGHT OUT *DARKNESS*... FEARED THE *SUN*... AND LUSTED FOR THE TASTE OF FRESH *HUMAN BLOOD*!

IN SHORT, THEY HAD ALL THE *SYMPTOMS* OF VAMPIRES, BUT ONE...

...THEY WEREN'T *DEAD*!

THE BROTHERS *SPREAD* THEIR VAMPIRIC DISEASE BY FEEDING FROM THEIR VICTIMS... JUST ENOUGH TO ALLOW THE VICTIM TO *LIVE*... AND BECOME A WALKING *VAMPIRE* TOO!

BUT THE MOST *POPULAR* VAMPIRE OF ALL TIME IS STILL... *DRACULA*!

AND WHETHER THE KING OF THE UNDEAD IS USED IN *MOVIES*, *BOOKS* OR *COMICS*, HE ALWAYS MANAGES TO GET HIMSELF *KILLED*!

...UNLIKE MOST OF THE OTHER *VAMPIRES* IN THE WORLD!



Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE